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THE



# LEISURE HOUR

DECEMBER, 1883.

## Contents.

- Animals Wild and Tame 705
- 22, St. James's Place . . 709
- Christopher: a Story of  
Life in Texas . . . 715
- Women as Civil Servants 721
- Mr. Gladstone's Latin  
Hymns . . . . . 724
- Venice . . . . . 725
- A Football Match in 1815 730
- Miners: their Customs  
and Superstitions . . 731
- A Midnight Watch in  
Germany . . . . . 734



## Contents.

- A Mecklenburg Rectory 736
- A Perilous Ride . . . 739
- Natural History Notes . 746
- Esop in Mongolia . . . 748
- A Scotch Story; as True  
as Strange . . . . . 751
- Christmas "Then" and  
"Now" . . . . . 756
- Some Closing Accounts . 758
- The Tower of Constance 714
- The Changes of the Year 764
- Varieties . . . . . 761

### ALMANACK FOR DECEMBER, 1883.

1 S	☾ rises 7.45 A.M.	9 S	2 SUN. IN ADVENT	17 M	☾ rises 8.3 A.M.	25 T	CHRISTMAS DAY
2 S	ADVENT SUNDAY	10 M	☾ rises 7.57 A.M.	18 T	Orion S. at mdnt.	26 W	Bank Holiday
3 M	Venus sets 4.57 P.M.	11 T	Venus S. 1.22 P.M.	19 W	Saturn S. 10.21 P.M.	27 T	☾ rises 8.8 A.M.
4 T	Clk. af. ☾ 9m. 41s.	12 W	☾ least dis. from ☉	20 T	Daybreak 5.58 A.M.	28 F	Clk. bef. ☉ 1m. 42s.
5 W	Mars rises 9 P.M.	13 T	Twil. ends 5.55 P.M.	21 F	☾ 3 Quar. 8.8 A.M.	29 S	New ☾ 0.59 P.M.
6 T	Jupiter S. 3.28 A.M.	14 F	Full ☾ 3.28 A.M.	22 S	☾ sets 3.51 P.M.	30 S	S. A.P. CHRISTMAS
7 F	☾ 1 Qr. 11.45 A.M.	15 S	☾ sets 3.49 P.M.	23 S	4 SUN. IN ADVENT	31 M	☾ sets 3.58 P.M.
8 S	☾ sets 3.49 P.M.	16 S	3 SUN. IN ADVENT	24 M	☾ grtst. dis. from ☉		

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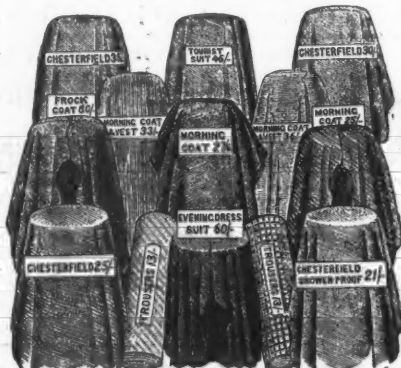
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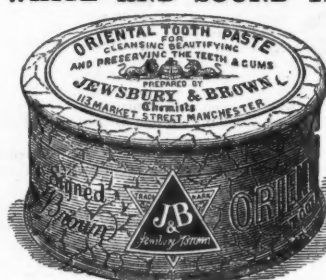
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THE FINISHING TOUCH.

I  
as to  
them



# ANIMALS WILD AND TAME.



BRINGING UP BY HAND.

I WONDER whether the more intelligent amongst domestic animals—dogs and horses, for example—ever reason amongst themselves as to the nature of the destiny which has brought them under servitude to the arrogant biped? If

so, I wonder what their reasoning ends in—what their verdict may be concerning the advantages or disadvantages, the rights or the wrongs, of their position? Man's domesticated—and in a larger acceptance of the term, man's *reclaimed*—

animals may be said to be "taken in and done for" in a good or a bad sense, accordingly as they may happen to have good or bad masters; but regarded generally, I think the lot of animals which man has brought wholly or partially under subjection is better, more comfortable, happier in the main (if the word happiness may be applied to mere brute perceptiveness) than it would have been had the animals brought under dominion continued wild.

Suppose we investigate the proposition, to which end let us figure to ourselves, if possible, certain tame, or reclaimed, species as existing side by side with unreclaimed ones. When we come to think about it, the condition we are in quest of presents but few examples. There are wild elephants, indeed, as there are tame elephants, and both, so to speak, live side by side. Again, there are wild pigs as there are tame pigs, and these, too, though not in England, live side by side. Add the less commonly considered case of llamas and guanacos, the former tame representatives of the latter, and we exhaust our comparative case almost, if not quite. Wild horses there are, indeed, in the North American prairies, in the American pampas, and elsewhere; but, so far as concerns America, at least, there are no indigenous wild horses. Of course I need hardly state that horses were altogether unknown in America before the Spaniards took them there; hence American wild horses are very differently circumstanced to horses wild from the first. It is considered a very doubtful point by naturalists whether any race of horses indigenously or originally wild be now in existence. Certain naturalists take the affirmative view, and accord to existing indigenous wild horses some part of the immense Asiatic table-land vaguely known as Tartary, or Thibet. The majority of naturalists, I fancy, are of the opinion that the race of horses originally wild is altogether extinct. From horses to donkeys the transition is not so very abrupt; what then are we warranted in affirming about them? what have we to state about *their* ancestry? Nothing for certain, though a considerable balance of testimony favours the hypothesis that our domestic thistle-eating, obstinate, long-eared, slow-going friends are lineally descended from the onager, or wild-ass tribe, animals considered good eating by the Greeks and Romans of antiquity, when the Greeks and Romans could catch them, for the onager is not only a very fleet but also a very fierce animal, as specimens yet to be found in the wilds and mountains of Persia amply testify.

Prying into the ancestry of dogs, the investigator soon loses himself in doubt and speculation. That the dog is merely a reclaimed wolf hardly bears looking into; far more probable it seems that reclaimed dogs are merely the descendants of wild dogs, the races of which are mostly exterminated. Probably, in times long gone by, wild dogs were found in many parts of the world, and man reclaimed them. Probably, different climates have in the course of time given rise to different varieties. In this way it is well attested that certain European dogs, especially hounds and pointers,

if taken to India, degenerate after some descents to the character approximate to that of the native East Indian pariah dogs. A circumstance strongly favouring the opinion that wild dogs had formerly a very wide range of distribution is found in the presence of wild dogs called "dingoes," in Australia and Van Diemen's Land. It is a marked characteristic of the Antipodean fauna that the species and members of which it consists are strange; that they have mostly so little alliance with animals constituting the old world, and the American fauna. Thus, in Australia and Australia only, is the strange ornithorhynchus or duck-billed platypus found. Of kangaroos the same may be said—those queer vertebrate flea-like quadrupeds that progress by jumping rather than by walking, and which throughout Australia are found representing many species, the individuals of which vary from the smallness of a rat to the bigness of a heifer. Nevertheless, Australia and Van Diemen's Land have their native wild dogs, as emigrant shepherds discovered to their cost and occasionally still find to their sorrow.

Cats—whence did *they* come—what is *their* ancestry? Nobody knows. If we choose to affirm—"from wild cats," the expression is ambiguous, seeing that in different countries the term *wild-cat* is given to different small species of the tiger tribe. As regards our British, or rather Scottish wild cats, these are animals which in the opinion of most naturalists differ from the mousing tabbies of our homes and hearths in some essential or generic particulars. Not to lose the thread of our discourse, be it remembered that we applied ourselves to the case of, comparing if possible the condition and prospects of tame species with those of corresponding wild species still in existence; and relative thereto the statement was made that, with the exception of elephants and swine, for a certainty, and donkeys, and llamas, under some sort of reservation, the necessary elements of comparison are no longer available. In making this statement, however, be it understood that the remark can only be held to apply to quadrupeds; in respect to domestic and reclaimed birds the case is different. Wild barn-door fowls are still to be met with in the forests of Burmah. Pintadoes or guinea-fowls still roam wild in Africa. Wild turkeys still afford good shooting in America; and wild geese and ducks are common enough even in our own native isles.

Restricting the observations with which we set out to quadrupeds, it will be found to hold very good, even though we count off one by one all the races of reclaimed animals upon the tips of our fingers. Horses, dogs, and cats, we have done with them; and the exceptional position of donkeys and onagers, llamas and guanacos, has already come under observation. Now, llamas and guanacos may be regarded as a sort of diminutive New World camel, doing in America the duties of camels and dromedaries in Asia and Africa, and affording a far more valuable hair (or wool, if we choose to call it so) than their bigger representatives. It is a point worthy of remark, that although the tame llama still finds its re-

presentative in the wild guanaco, yet the wild progenitors of camels and dromedaries have altogether disappeared.

The origin of sheep and goats, again, respectively, is involved in much uncertainty. Often, indeed, a Thibetan or Tartarian origin is attributed to both; and wild progenitors of sheep and goats are often referred to as extant by Oriental travellers. This may be—indeed, probably *is* so—but it is a belief rather than a certainty. Climate, association with man, the continuance of a particular diet, and other artificial states, are known to exercise a wonderful influence upon animal tribes thus circumstanced, sooner or later; but perhaps no animals are so affected by artificial conditions in so short a time—that is to say, after so few generations—as sheep. Whether the coat of a sheep shall be soft—deserving the appellation of wool—or whether it shall be hard and harsh—hairy, that is to say, not woolly—is a matter dependent more on climate and surrounding conditions than on any peculiarity of breed; hence the ill-success which has mostly attended the removal of Merino sheep from their Spanish domiciles.

Last, though not least in stature or in importance, whence, I wonder, did oxen—horned cattle—come? Were their ancestors buffaloes, or a sort of buffaloes—were they mere wild bulls and cows of a race no longer to be met with? It is all a mystery—nobody knows; therefore would it be vain to propose the question to tame horned cattle, whether they would rather join their indigenous wild fellow-beings, or remain in companionship with man, seeing that there are no wild fellows of their race remaining.

And thus, having seemingly gone through the list of animals reclaimed by man—brought more or less completely under his dominion and into companionship with him—we really do find elephants and pigs (barring llamas) furnish us with the only means of comparison between contemporaneous wild species on the one hand, and contemporaneous tame species on the other. Elephants and pigs having been thus brought into companionship, on paper, for an obvious reason, and a sufficient cause, we must here note a remarkable fact—a particular in which elephants differ from pigs as widely—metaphorically, so to express oneself—as the antipodes. Tame elephants very rarely breed, hence each one of these animals ever brought under the dominion of man has had to be entrapped in his wild forest haunts, and humanised, so to speak, by tuition. Now, although no example has ever been known of a wild elephant voluntarily subjecting himself to servitude, whereas cases of tame elephants running away to the forests and becoming wild elephants are not unfrequent, nevertheless, upon the whole, I think it seems to appear that tame elephants like their servitude pretty well, considering. This is shown by the readiness they manifest to entrap their forest friends, and by the circumstance that though they are frequently allowed to go into the forest wilds and forage on their own behalf—out on furlough, so to speak—yet instances of their breaking faith and deserting are, after all, compa-

ratively rare. Moreover, we may infer a certain resignation, even contentment, of elephants with their servitude, from the consideration that these great beasts are decidedly epicurean in their tastes. A tame elephant knows very well that his puny little biped lord and master has ways and means of preparing small toothsome relishes, altogether beyond the scope of elephantine competence. Elephants, for example, are very weak in the matter of sweets or bonbons. No French young lady can be fonder of sugar-plums than is one of those long-snouted, sagacious monsters. Not that I would signify bonbons in any young-lady-like or literal sense; but certain great balls of very black and very moist sugar, known in India as “saggery balls.” Do pigs like captivity?—would tame pigs rather be wild pigs?—in a word, are our domestic grunTERS satisfied with their lot?—*are they happy?* Upon the whole, I seem to think they are—how else should they grow so fat? Could they reason about the ultimate end of all this fattening; could they take to heart and understand, or even guess, the meaning of those heartrending squeaks which sometimes reverberate through the farmyard just after some pigsty has been emptied of its fattest porker, then, of course, the felicity of domestic pigs would be somewhat interfered with; but, all things considered, I seem to fancy they enjoy a fair proportion of the sort of sluggish bliss that comes of ignorance; or, at any rate, the abnegation of positive sorrow, which, in creatures so stupid as pigs are, comes as near, perhaps, to bliss as their porcine nature admits of.

The philosopher, in establishing his generalisations, must always cull his evidence from the stores of a sufficiently extensive field. When we arrive at the general expression that the animals man has reclaimed are happier, better off for the reclamation, and that the creatures themselves testify to this dictum by remaining in captivity although they might often escape, then of course do we pronounce concerning the general result, not paying heed to exceptions. No animal is allied with mankind to a degree at all equal with the dog; and yet cases are recorded of tame dogs running wild even here in England, where so few requisitions necessary to a wild canine existence are available.

In 1784 some smugglers left a dog on the coast of Northumberland. Having to shift for himself he turned sheep-stealer, and did immense mischief to the flocks. He was frequently pursued by hounds and greyhounds, but when his pursuers came up he fell upon his back as if beseeching compassion, which under these circumstances was always granted—his pursuers would never harm him. In this position he would lie until the hunters approached, when he would run away without being followed by the hounds until they were further excited. In this way he once led them a chase of thirty miles. This wild roving life he led for three months, when he was at last caught and killed.

This one may call a case of wildness from necessity; but the following is one of wildness from choice. A black greyhound belonging to a



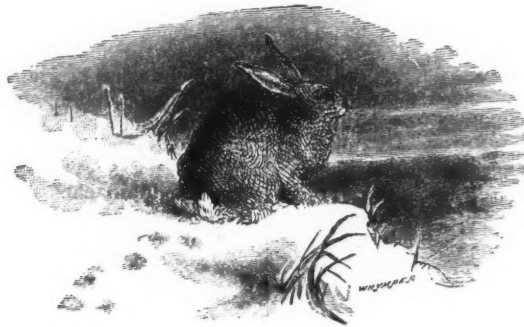
gentleman at Scarisbrook in Lancashire, though she had apparently been well broken-in, and always well treated, ran away from her master and betook herself to the woods. She killed a great number of hares, and also made free with the sheep, becoming so great a nuisance that the neighbours resolved to set upon her. For more than six months, however, she defied all their efforts to catch her. At length she was seen to creep into a hole in an old barn. As she came out she was caught, and the barn being searched, three puppies were found, which very foolishly were destroyed. The runaway was extremely ferocious, and although well secured, attempted to seize every one who approached her. She was, however, dragged home, and being treated with kindness, by degrees her ferocity abated. In the course of two months she became perfectly reconciled to her original abode, and a twelve-month afterwards she ran successfully several courses. Still her looks and ways remained ever after somewhat wild; but never afterwards did she attempt to run away.

Marauding cats, too, are not unfrequent; cats who, disdaining the milk and cream of civilised life and the small game of occasional mice, elect to take refuge in the rabbit-warren, therein committing depredations. Such exceptions only help to prove the rule; moreover they admit of being parried with counter-exceptions, possessing at least equal weight. Most persons are aware of the value of dogs to the Esquimaux. In the frozen regions wherein those people dwell, dogs are the horses and donkeys, so to speak, doing all the truck and cart-horse work—a good deal of the pack-horse work, moreover. Their services are only valuable, however, in the winter time, when snow is on the ground and sledging practicable. No sooner does the snow melt than the wintry railroad is destroyed and dogs are at a discount. What then do the Esquimaux do? Are the dogs kennelled and taken care of until next winter comes round? Not a bit of it; they are turned adrift by their masters to find provision, each dog on his own behalf, the question of their return or non-return to be settled by the dogs' own sense of honour, or perhaps, as we ought to say, their

own notions of interest. I fancy that some savoury memories of dried fish may linger in the Esquimaux canine mind, the reasoned conviction being ultimately arrived at that such savoury fare is worth a little servitude. Certain it is, however, that the Esquimaux dogs mostly do come back and labour at their appointed work; the snow-clad regions inhabited by the Esquimaux would be well-nigh uninhabitable without them.

Having thus glanced cursorily at the animals man takes in and does for, I think then we are warranted in coming to the conclusion that—speaking in a general way—their servitude is by no means hard; that moreover it is by no means considered hard by the animals themselves. If it be advanced that they lose some privileges by coming within the bounds of civilised society, why then a rejoinder is handy—this is no more than happens to man himself. Unquestionably some privileges have to be abandoned by every human individual who joins his fellow-men to form a community; but the question is—and it will not be found difficult to answer—whether the privileges gained are not vastly more than the privileges abandoned. If reclaimed animals be treated considerately, as every Christian man, woman, and child ought to treat them, they are not wanting in affection. To affirm this of dogs and horses is to affirm a truism. Under kind treatment the very being and existence of these animals become merged in the being and existence of their masters; but the influence of kindness is made more manifest by animals not so usually petted.

Pigs I have already designated as somewhat stupid animals—and somewhat stupid animals they indeed are—nevertheless pigs in certain parts of France are taught to smell out and grub up truffles. Cows again can be made almost as tame as dogs, if they be brought much into human companionship when calves; and the writer of this once owned a fallow deer fawn that was never so happy as when, finding her way upstairs, she would nestle upon a bed. Mostly, if animals have no love for man it is because man has given them little cause to love him; a hatred of mankind is not impressed upon animals of the reclaimable sort by Nature.





## 22, ST. JAMES'S PLACE.

BY THE REV. E. FAXTON HOOD.



*Samuel Rogers*

*From the Portrait by Lawrence.]*

THERE is a little nook in the West end of London, lying off from St. James's Street on the park side, which has, even for centuries, had a reputation as furnishing the homes and haunts of distinguished people. Indeed, St. James's Street and its immediate neighbourhood are aromatic with the memory of great names; but St. James's Place is, or certainly was years since, a pleasantly retired and secluded little nook in the very heart of the great Babel. It appears to have been created towards the close of the seventeenth century, somewhere about 1690. There, for some time, lived Joseph Addison, as also Parnell, the poet. Here we are told that John Wilkes had very "elegant lodgings"; here lived Lord Hervey, the subject of the memoirs, and of Pope's wicked satire, with his wife, the beautiful Mary Lepel; here, at No. 25, lived Lord Guilford, and, next door to him, that singular hero of political vicissitudes resided, Sir Francis Burdett, the father of the Baroness Burdett-Coutts. He resided here from 1820 till the year of his death in 1844, so that we shall find this to be but an episode in the life of that, which is certainly the most distinguished of these quiet houses, 22, St. James's Place.

There is a singular charm about old houses, and especially those which have been the homes of men of genius; but they are fast disappearing from London. Bolt Court still retains the flavour of Johnson's name, but little that can be called a vestige or remnant of the old house; Canonbury Tower reminds us of Goldsmith, but the traces of his habitation there are all gone; and it is probable that even the illustrious hermitage of Cheyne Row, the old-fashioned red-brick house, the retreat for fifty years of the philosopher of Chelsea, will before long be obliterated beneath the wave of modern progress and improvement.

For many years during the earliest part of the present century there were especially three houses in London which were the charmed circles within the enclosure of whose walls the highest of the land, who had attained an eminence in every department of literature, familiarly met and commingled. There were, of course, many houses where literary receptions and reunions occasionally took place, but these three homes, with their hosts, have acquired an immortality in the history of letters. One of them was Holland House, where, however high and distinguished the literary circle,

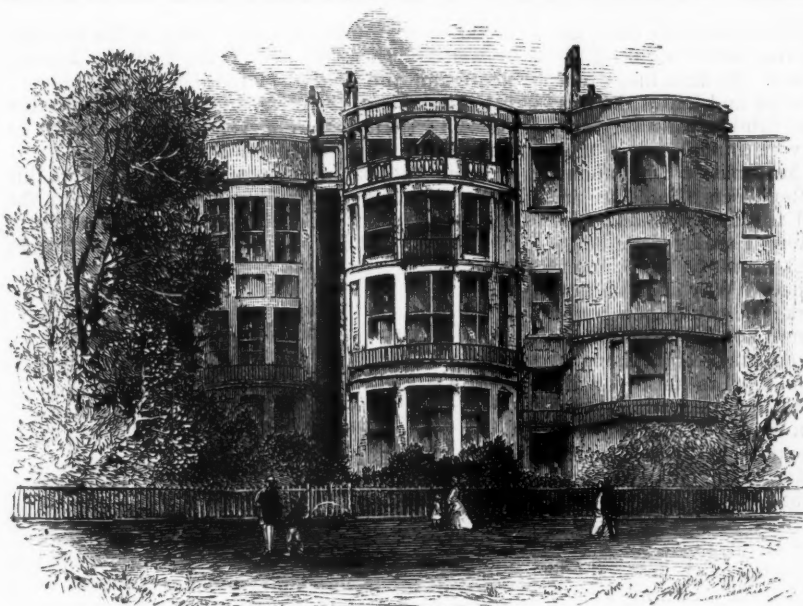
there was always a political flavour, and if the guests shone out brilliantly in the ranks of wit, imagination, and the arts, they were also men who were related by political sympathies. The house, and its varied furniture in every room, was an amazing repository of materials and associations for cultured memories, and its guests were entertained by all that wealth and taste could supply. From the fashionable and aristocratic West to the homely North, to Islington, then the beloved abode of City magnates, is a considerable leap, but not so great as the leap from Lord Holland's palatial magnificence to the humble abode of Charles Lamb, in Colebrooke Row; but this also was famous for its modest suppers—not comprising rich wines, salmis, and *entrées*, but restricted to the foaming tankard of London porter, and the dish of oysters, far more possible to a poor poet then than now. How different from those of Holland House! Yet numbers of the men who found the modest room to be the unbinder of care were among the greatest in the literature of the day, albeit their common lowliness in the walks of life gave a freedom and a fellowship which might not have been so readily realised in statelier homes and more aristocratic companies. But it may be supposed beyond question the most purely literary home in London in those years was 22, St. James's Place, the delightful house of the rich banker-poet, Samuel Rogers. His breakfasts for many years were famous, not so much for the affluence of graceful hospitality as for the company which the host gathered round him usually on every Tuesday, a company which frequently had some of the most humble labourers in the world of letters or in the studios of art, not only from our own country, but from foreign shores, and with these mingling freely and affably, and on equal terms, in the republic or peerage of genius, noblemen, men of rank, or men of wealth, but who loved, and perhaps personally cultivated in many instances, the pursuits of poetry, or learning, or the fine arts. Beyond a doubt, in future years novelists, perhaps dramatists, will lay some of their scenes in some of these rooms which will have become a tradition. And before the realisation fades out into a dim and scarcely realisable twilight, it would not be a bad subject for some great painter to suspend on the walls of the Academy the breakfast in the dining-room at 22, St. James's Place.

That very entertaining and delightful collection of things new and old, so rich in its engravings, especially of memorable places and scenes in the history of our great metropolis, "Old and New London," usually very accurate, says that the house was built by James Wyatt, R.A., and that Rogers took up his residence there in 1809; but the poet's distinguished nephew, Samuel Sharpe, says that when tired of the Temple Rogers sold his chambers, and resided for two or three years in lodgings while he was building for himself the house which was to become so famous, and into which he removed in 1803; and where, from the same sufficient authority, we learn that he dwelt till his death fifty-three years afterwards. And it is a noticeable circumstance that, when he gave his

first dinner party, Charles James Fox, then in the fulness of his fame, begged that he might not be omitted from the list of invitations; it is not likely that he would have been omitted even had he not thus invited himself, for at this time the poet and the orator were very close friends. Rogers had great admiration for the character of Fox as a statesman and an orator, but they had strong relationships of another kind in their hearty and delicate appreciation of the ancient classics, as well as the great masters of Italian and English literature; he was the frequent guest of Fox in the country, and the lines in which he commemorates their friendship are pensively characteristic of the tenderness of the poet and the noblest moods of the statesman.

"Thee at St. Anne's so soon of Care beguiled,  
Playful, sincere, and artless as a child!  
Thee, who wouldst watch a bird's nest on the spray,  
Through the green leaves exploring, day by day.  
How oft from grove to grove, from seat to seat,  
With thee conversing in thy loved retreat,  
I saw the sun go down!—Ah, then 'twas thine  
Ne'er to forget some volume half divine,  
Shakspeare's or Dryden's—thro' the chequered shade  
Borne in thy hand behind thee as we strayed;  
And where we sate (and many a halt we made)  
To read there with a fervour all thine own,  
And in thy grand and melancholy tone,  
Some splendid passage not to thee unknown,  
Fit theme for long discourse—Thy bell has tolled!"

As we have said, and as everybody knows, that dining-room became famous for its companies of celebrated guests; it was there, in that dining-room, says Mr. Hayward, in his appreciative essay on Rogers, that Erskine told the story of his first brief, and Grattan that of his last duel; it was there that the "Iron Duke" described Waterloo as "a battle of giants;" and it was interesting in the same room to hear the great old soldier talking to the poet on the Lord's Prayer, and saying how he regarded it as an evidence of the truth of Christianity, because so admirably and sufficiently accommodated to all our wants. It was there that Chantry, placing his hand on a mahogany pedestal, said, "Mr. Rogers, do you remember a workman at five shillings a day who came in at that door to receive your orders for this work? I was that workman." It was there that Byron's intimacy with Moore commenced over the famous mess of potatoes and vinegar. It was there Madame de Stael, after a triumphant argument with Macintosh, was, as Byron has it, "well ironed" by Sheridan. It was in that dining-room that Sydney Smith, at dinner with Walter Scott, Campbell, Moore, Wordsworth, and Washington Irving, declared that if he and Irving were the only prose writers they were not the only prosers in the company. And it was through that window, opening to the floor and leading through the gardens to the park, that the poet started with Sheridan's gifted granddaughter on the "Winter's Walk," a walk which she has so gracefully and feelingly commemorated. And our reader may notice in the accompanying engraving the glass



HOUSE OF ROGERS, THE POET, THE GREEN PARK.

doors from this room through which they passed into the park. The accomplished poetess made it the occasion for one of the most discriminating and affectionate estimates of her venerable companion. She was then in her earlier and most beautiful womanhood, and he verging on the octogenarian.

"Ah! who can e'er forget, who once hath heard,  
The gentle charm that dwells in every word  
Of thy calm converse? In its kind allied  
To some fair river's bright abundant tide.  
Who can forget, who at thy social board  
Hath sat, and seen the pictures richly stored,  
In all their tints of glory and of gloom,  
Brightening the precincts of thy quiet room;  
With busts and statues full of that deep grace  
Which modern hands have lost the skill to trace  
(Fragments of beauty—perfect as thy song  
On that sweet land to which they did belong),  
Th' exact and classic taste by thee displayed;  
Not with a rich man's idle fond parade,  
Not with the pomp of some vain connoisseur  
Proud of his bargains, of his judgment sure,  
But with the feelings kind and sad, of one  
Who thro' far countries wandering hath gone,  
And brought away dear keepsakes to remind  
His heart and home of all he left behind?"

Of the company which often assembled at the Tuesday morning breakfasts in that room, Crabb Robinson was the greatest talker, and when he was late Rogers would call out merrily to his guests, "If you have anything to say, say it now, for Crabb Robinson is coming." In that room, at one time or other during those fifty-five years, probably almost every celebrity of the age had been entertained. Above the dining-room, still looking out upon the Green Park—was the library

—if possible even yet more famous in biographic anecdote and reminiscence; for there some of the treasures of literary curiosity, and some of the most interesting fragments of conversation are recorded as having taken place. The house, too, was full of treasures, especially the delicious illustrations of the poet's works by Turner, whose genius Rogers had discovered and largely employed in an early period of the great painter's career, and very long before the affectionate and enthusiastic commentaries of John Ruskin.

The host of this No. 22 had a remarkable ancestry; he was descended directly, on his mother's side, from Mat-

thew Henry, the great Commentator. He was born in an old house on Newington Green, a spot which has not yet lost all the characteristics of a century since, when it was a retired suburban village, the retreat of the more wealthy of London citizens; and it is said that the poet transferred to almost the first verses of his "Pleasures of Memory" a pleasing picture of his early home and birthplace:—

"Mark yon old mansion frowning thro' the trees,  
Whose hollow turret woos the whistling breeze.  
That casement, arched with ivy's brownest shade,  
First to these eyes the light of heaven conveyed.  
The mouldering gateway strews the grass-grown court,  
Once the calm scene of many a simple sport;  
When Nature pleased, for life itself was new,  
And the heart promised what the fancy drew."

Thomas Rogers, the poet's father, was a wealthy banker of a lofty but simple character and high reputation; he belonged to the dissenting Presbyterian circle of Newington; with firm family religious observance, there was blended freedom of inquiry in matters of faith. There were several sons, and as they grew to maturity each by turns was expected to read the Scriptures in family worship. The poet was proud of his dissenting parentage, and was not ashamed to express it, as in the following lines:—

"What though his ancestors, early or late,  
Were not ennobled by the breath of kings;  
Yet in his veins was running at his birth  
The blood of those most eminent of old  
For wisdom, virtue,—those who could renounce  
The things of this world for their conscience sake,  
And die like blessed martyrs."



Having passed through his schoolboy days, he was very soon initiated into a rather rigid *régime* in his father's banking-house. In after life, when he became the Mæcenas of art and letters, he was sometimes charged, and we think usually very unjustly, with saying very severe things, and in this way a remark he made to Madame de Stael about the poet Campbell has often been alleged as an illustration of an unkind nature. Madame de Stael said to him, "How sorry I am for Campbell; his poverty so unsettles his mind that he cannot write." And Rogers replied, "Why does he not take the situation of a clerk? he could then compose verses during his leisure hours." Sir James Macintosh and Madame de Stael both thought this most cruel, and took him to task for it. Rogers vindicated himself, and said, there was both kindness and truth in what he had said, for, he continued, "when literature is the sole business of life it becomes a drudgery; when we are able to resort to it only at certain hours it is a charming relaxation. In my earlier years I was a banker's clerk, obliged to be at the desk every day from ten till five o'clock, and I never shall forget the delight with which on returning home I used to read and write during the evening." But when some one in Campbell's hearing was sharply talking about the spiteful things which Rogers had said, Campbell said, "Borrow five hundred pounds of him, and he will never say a word against you till you want to repay him." It was well known that Campbell had borrowed five hundred pounds of him, but, in the course of a short time, he returned it, disappointed in the intention with which he borrowed it, and the speedy return seems rather to have grieved Rogers, as he said, "I knew that he was every day pressed for small sums."

The present writer had the honour to receive, on the strength of a letter of introduction, much kindness from the host of No. 22, St. James's Place; he was several times at the house and knew the celebrated dining-room well; there, when he knew that room first, hung the famous "Ecce Homo" of Guido, which now so conspicuously adorns our National Gallery. It is, perhaps, with a not merely egotistic pleasure that the writer remembers how the poet received, and read, and criticised some of his first productions; and when, a few years afterwards, those pieces which he had so kindly approved were published, he not only permitted their dedication to himself, but, as the dedication says, he "condescended to encourage" the author, and the volume became thus the tribute of gratitude as well as homage. This is written in no vanity, but as a modest rejoinder to some remarks which have appeared lately, affirming that the great poet never knew the luxury of doing good; the writer was then only a poor, and utterly unknown youth, but, when the note of introduction had been handed in, Mr. Rogers himself came out into the hall and pulled the writer into the dining-room; and this was the first of several kindly receptions. The poet was a man of wealth, but his wealth bore no proportion to his generosity; it is now understood that he gave away, in helpful benevolence and noble generosity, to artists and authors, and all whom he

could succour or serve, about a fifth of his income. A well-known writer says, "He had the kindest heart and the unkindest tongue I ever knew;" the kind heart is very distinctly realised to the present writer, but we never knew an accent of unkindness from the tongue.

From the banker's clerk, on the death of his father, Rogers became the chief partner in the bank, and soon glided into the patron and lover of letters. The words in which he alludes to himself are very tender and true.

"Nature denied him much,  
But gave him at his birth what most he values;  
A passionate love for music, sculpture, painting,  
For poetry, the language of the gods,  
For all things here or grand or beautiful,  
A setting sun, a lake among the mountains,  
The light of an ingenuous countenance,  
And what transcends them all, a noble action."

The poem with which the name of Rogers is usually associated, "The Pleasures of Memory," and several other pieces, had been published in early life; but those of which he thought most highly himself, and which will give the greatest emphasis to his memory, were written in St. James's Place—the "Voyage of Columbus," "Human Life," and "Italy," as also many others. "Human Life" was, we believe, considered by himself as his best work, and most readers will probably coincide with this opinion; it contains passages of what may be truly termed ineffable beauty, couplets of calm but elevated wisdom; it is human life, indeed, from a Twickenham point of view, but it is human life. Rogers had not a flowing or a fluent pen, every syllable was studied and moulded on the principles of an exquisite taste; he had no motives for haste, and the care with which he polished his expressions often exposed him to the jokes of his friends. It is remarkable that although a wit, and often a rather severe cynic, this never appears in his verse, not even in a subject which we might suppose would have furnished many occasions for such scintillations as "Human Life;" some of the passages are characterised not less by their strength than by their beauty—for instance, the following on the insensible changes of life are surely very impressive:—

"No eye observes the growth or the decay.  
To-day we look as we did yesterday;  
And we shall look to-morrow as to-day.  
Yet while the loveliest smiles, her locks grow grey,  
And in her glass could she but see the face  
She'll see so soon amid another race,  
How would she shrink!—Returning from afar,  
After some years of travel, some of war,  
Within his gate Ulysses stood unknown  
Before a wife, a father, and a son!"

There is very little in the poetry of Samuel Rogers in unison with the critical, analytical, and introspective spirit of our times, and it is especially a verse which proves its sweetness as life advances, and thought becomes more quiet and meditative; those lines have often been quoted—



"When by a good man's grave I muse alone,  
Methinks an Angel sits upon the stone,  
And, with a voice inspiring joy not fear,  
Says, pointing upward, 'Know, he is not here!'"

"Italy" was another poem produced in No. 22. This has, perhaps, been most frequently quoted, and it abounds in passages of strength and nervous vigour, in expression and energy of graphic description beyond either of the poet's works; its brief prose essays also are perfect models of purity and elegance in composition. He visited Italy several times. We are very familiar with most of the scenes, spots, and places he made the subjects of his meditative verse fifty years since; we have travelled through them all with his most delightful poem in our hand, and thought how different the Italy which Rogers knew and described from that which the traveller visits now.

And it surely may be spoken of as a kind of poetical justice that the poet who had sung so sweetly the "Pleasures of Memory" should, in the order of Providence, be permitted to see so lengthened a period of age, and to renew memories which must have been to him for the most part pleasant. He was born in 1763; he died in 1855. It was an extraordinary prolongation of human life, and the things and persons he saw are most noteworthy. He was eleven years old when the American Revolution began, and he used to say how he then received a lesson, which he never forgot, when his father, who was Member of Parliament for Coventry, one night, after family worship, closed the Bible, and explained to the children the cause of the rebellion, telling them that our nation was in the wrong, and that it was not right to wish that the Americans should be conquered. "I remember," he used to say, "one of the heads of the rebels at Temple Bar—a black, shapeless lump." He used to tell how, walking one day from his father's bank, he saw a crowd of people streaming into a chapel in the City Road. "I followed them," he said, "and saw laid out upon a table the dead body of a clergyman in full canonicals. It was the corpse of John Wesley, and the crowd moved slowly and silently round and round the table to take a last look at that most venerable man." He used to tell how he and his friend and schoolfellow, William Maltby, had a strong desire to see Dr. Johnson, and they went to the doctor's door. But just as they were about to lift the knocker, frightened at their own temerity, they ran away. Many years after Rogers mentioned this to Boswell, who said, "What a pity you did not go in, he would have received you with all kindness." He used to tell, also, how he knew an aged boatman, who, when a lad, had often assisted his father in rowing a certain Mr. Alexander Pope up and down the River Thames. When he was a very young man he went to Scotland—and how remarkable it seems to the present writer that he should have walked and talked with one who had breakfasted with Adam Smith, and had been acquainted with Robertson the historian, and Henry Mackenzie;—and he used to speak of

one very memorable Sunday he passed in Edinburgh, when, after breakfasting with Robertson, he heard him preach in the forenoon, Blair in the afternoon, took coffee with the Piozzis, and supped with Adam Smith. He used to say, "To any one who has reached a very advanced age, a walk through the streets of London is like a walk through a cemetery. How many houses do I pass, now inhabited by strangers, in which I used to spend such happy hours with those who have long been dead and gone!" And whom did he not know—with whom had he not kept company—receiving at his own house or visiting at their own, on terms of easy and equal rank, or friendship?—princes of the royal family, the most illustrious peers, the most distinguished men of letters! He was often a visitor at Oatlands, the house of the Duke and Duchess of York. It was upon the occasion of one of these visits, when Monk Lewis was another of the guests, that, after the Duchess had been speaking to Lewis, his eyes filled with tears. "We asked," said Rogers, "what was the matter." "Oh," said Lewis, "the Duchess spoke so very kindly to me!" And one of them replied—and we have little doubt it was Rogers—"My dear fellow, pray don't cry, I dare say she didn't mean it." In Holland House Rogers was almost as much the master of the mansion as the noble host and hostess. There, still, the visitor is shown the room which is called "Rogers's room;" in the Dutch garden there is a summer-house, still called "Rogers's seat," with the inscription over it from the pen of the elegant scholar and master of the mansion.

"Here Rogers sat, and here for ever dwell  
With me those pleasures that he sings so well."

Whom had he not known, of all the men or women of the age of whom we desire to know something? He had seen Garrick act; he was familiar with Mrs. Siddons; he was a visitor, by invitation, for some time to William Beckford at Fonthill during its period of refined magnificence, and heard him read passages from manuscripts which have never seen the light. He was present on the second day of the trial of Warren Hastings in Westminster Hall, and heard Sheridan during that great oration, when, says Rogers, "you might have heard a pin drop, so great was the attention." He knew Parr well, and he used to boast that when Porson dined with him he was always able to keep him within bounds. He was on intimate terms with Talleyrand; he had dined and danced with the Princess of Wales, afterwards the unhappy Queen Caroline; he had been the intimate friend of those two celebrated women, Jane, the Duchess of Gordon, and Georgiana, the beautiful Duchess of Devonshire. In his father's house he had known the very eminent Dr. Price—indeed he was the pastor of the family, and Rogers speaks in distinguished terms of his perfection as a preacher, and the gentlemanly bearing which constituted him a welcome guest in the most distinguished homes of the Whig aristocracy. He had known John Wilkes very well; he had seen Lord North, and although he had never seen Tom

Warton and Gibbon and Horace Walpole and Burns and Cowper, "it is truly provoking," he says, "that I *might* have seen them all." There must have been in this man some amazing fascination which made him the welcome guest of persons so varied and so eminent; and it is somewhat singular that the reminiscences of this interesting man have not been gathered into some comprehensive and adequate memoir.

The celebrated house never had a mistress. Rogers never married; he had a calm, tender, and generous heart, but which was, perhaps, incapable of passion. The nearest approach he ever made to marriage was but remote. To his more familiar friends he would sometimes tell the story of his admiration and, perhaps, love for a beautiful girl, the charm of London society, when he was young; to his latest day he thought her the most beautiful girl he had ever seen. But his words to her never passed beyond admiration, although he so constantly sought her society. One evening, after a ball, she said, "I go to Worthing to-morrow; are you coming there?" He did not go. Some months afterwards, at Ranelagh, his attention was drawn to a large party which had just entered, in the centre of which was a lady leaning on the arm of her husband; and stepping forward, he found the lady was his earliest and latest love. She merely said, "You never came to Worthing!"

In 1850, upon the death of Wordsworth, Prince Albert wrote to him, by desire of the Queen,

offering to him the post of Poet-Laureate, but he declined the office, partly on account of his age, saying he was only the shadow of his former self; and further alleging that, as he had no need of money, it would be wrong to divert the income from a channel in which it might be more useful.

His remains rest with his brother Henry and his beloved sister Sarah, in the vault in Hornsey Church. He gave very particular directions that he should not be buried in Westminster Abbey; he praised Pope's refusal to be buried there, and, whenever the subject was mentioned, said to his nephew, "Remember, Sam, I am not to be buried in Westminster Abbey."

The portrait which illustrates this paper is one of the most favourable; it was taken in the poet's prime of life by Sir Thomas Lawrence, to whom he had often lent a benevolent and helpful hand—as to how many besides. The story is well known of his saving the dead body of Sheridan from arrest, and paying a claim by the side of his coffin; and few men who have filled so great a place in the world of fashionable society more truly deserves the commendation that he visited the poor "in their affliction, and kept himself unspotted from the world."

Space forbids us to say more, but we have surely said sufficient to show that one of the most interesting houses in London is 22, St. James's Place.

### The Tower of Constance.

WITH dreary step the years go round,  
No changing joys beguile their way;  
The skies but mock the barren ground,  
And night is welcome as the day.  
Spring gathers never garland fair,  
And Autumn reaps not golden grain;  
Death broods upon the heavy air,  
And Life is weariness and pain.

The sea that mirrored sun and star  
And brought sweet music from the deep  
Now rolls its gleaming waves afar,  
And lulleth other lands to sleep.  
Its salt tears sow the wastes that spread  
Bare round the Tower of ancient gloom;  
Earth lies forlorn, in silence dread,  
The years but speak its steadfast doom.

More drear, more drear the circling years  
Within those walls of gloomy fame,  
Where the bright dawn like eve appears,  
And joy and sorrow seem the same.  
None goeth forth but must forswear  
The faith that is the soul's true breath;  
—Yet Love is stronger than Despair,  
Life crowns the faithful unto death.

Here pines the mother for her child,—  
The wife laments her husband lost,—  
The granddame withers,—maiden mild  
Droops like a flower in northern frost:  
Slow pass the years, yet each one grows  
To riper virtues in her lot;  
Come summer heats, come winter snows,  
She knows the Christ who changeth not.

Here weaker woman waits and prays,  
Enduring in the strength divine;  
A simple faith her spirit stays,  
And unseen glories round her shine:  
She fades and dies. One word alone  
She leaves to rouse the drooping will,  
Fast graven in the dungeon stone,  
"Resistez!"—There, it speaketh still.

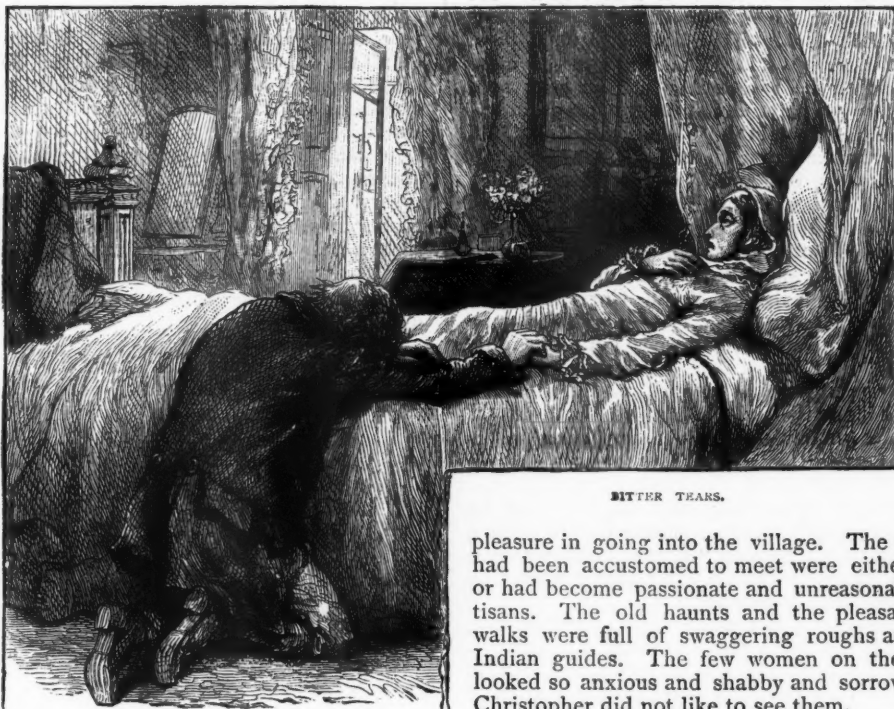
The years shall come, with summer glow—  
Past shining seas—o'er lands all fair,—  
And wide the gloomy portals throw,  
And breathe the life of God's free air.  
"Resistez!" still that word abides,  
In strenuous strife of good with ill;  
When pleasure lures, or scorn derides,  
"Resistez!"—gird thy fainting will.

W. STEVENS.

## CHRISTOPHER:

A STORY OF LIFE IN TEXAS.

### CHAPTER III.



BITTER TEARS.

**A**FTER the pain and sorrow of the day no blessing could have been more grateful to Christopher than the sleep that at length overtook him. In a trance of calm unconsciousness he forgot life and all its loves and anxieties until just before daybreak. Then he awakened broadly, and saw Robert sitting by the fire. He called the young man gently, and he responded at once. "I was waiting for you to waken, Chris. I have seen General Green, and promised to gather my men and meet him on the road to Santa Fé as soon as possible, but I wanted to speak to you before I start."

Christopher rose slowly, lit his pipe, and sat down for a last talk with his son. He made him a cup of coffee, gave him a purse of gold pieces, and promised him to care for Inez as if she was his own daughter. More than once he was on the point of revealing himself, but a chivalric feeling restrained him. So he kissed and sent his only son away in the first dawn of the morning, and what solemn words were said and what promises made, God and the ever-watchful angels heard.

The days were pitifully long and empty now. Inez came as often as she could, but her health was frail, and Christopher had no longer any

pleasure in going into the village. The men he had been accustomed to meet were either away, or had become passionate and unreasonable partisans. The old haunts and the pleasant side-walks were full of swaggering roughs and tipsy Indian guides. The few women on the streets looked so anxious and shabby and sorrowful that Christopher did not like to see them.

Still it was necessary for him to go occasionally to buy corn and fodder, and to collect the rents due to him. One afternoon, a cold, still one, as he was standing by the head of Geranium, just ready to commence his walk home, he heard a succession of piercing shrieks. Then he saw an open carriage coming up the street, and in it was a woman wringing her hands, and crying out with an abandon that could only proceed from some overwhelming sorrow. It was Clarissa. Her coachman drove steadily on, and men lifted their hats as she passed, and women looked sadly at her, and spoke in sympathising tones.

"She has just heard of the judge's death," said Haney, joining the group at the hotel door. "Young Kelly got home to-day without an arm and with a bad wound in his side, and he says the judge fell at Corinth."

"Is he sure of that?" asked Christopher.

"Says he saw him drop, and looked for him after the battle. As he was turning up the dead faces in the moonlight a man partially rose and called out, '*Second Texas! Second Texas!*' Thought he knew the voice, and went at once to his help. It was Judge Terry, but he died with the word 'Texas' on his lips. Says he went then and woke up Jim Wade, and that they two buried him. He's been in a power of fights, and



never knew him to get hurt before," said Haney, "and no doubt the madam feels pretty badly. He was a mighty good provider, and no ways unkind to her."

Then Christopher said "Good night," and left the company to their further discussion of the dead man's character.

Very sad was the old man that night. He had not even a word for the patient beasts that plodded beside him, but he stroked them kindly at intervals, and Dick, who was the more intelligent of the two, looked at him with soft, pleading eyes, a look Christopher perhaps understood, for he said gently, "Thank you, Dick. I'll be all right to-morrow, Dick."

The morrow brought a circumstance which forced Christopher into active life again. He had another visit from Inez's negro maid. She seemed at first at a loss how to introduce her request, but finally she did the right thing, stated it plainly and broadly. "Massa Chris'pher, I'se come to beg some coffee. Miss Inez, she's done got a terrible headache, and we'se got none in de house."

Christopher looked at the girl, and she answered the look positively. "Dat's de fact, Massa Chris'pher. Had none eider for 'leven weeks now, and Miss Inez is powerful set on some to-day."

Then Christopher rose, and divided what he had with the girl, and she, finding him in such a generous mood, added, "If you could spare a cupful ob sugar, Massa Chris'pher, it would be most oncommon 'ceptable."

Of course, she got some sugar, besides salt, spices, rice, and even pins and needles. The circumstance opened Christopher's eyes, and set him thinking. Poverty of the worst kind was at their door—that poverty which leaves the rich unable to help the poor, the absolute want of the article. He went into the village and made inquiries. There was no coffee, no tea, no flannel, or calico, or shoes, or stockings, or a hundred other things necessary to civilised life. His proposition to go to the Rio Grande and procure these things was hailed with a cry of gratitude, and before he had well considered the difficulties of the undertaking he found himself pledged to it.

However, a great deal that is hard can be made easy with gold, and Christopher had plenty of gold. In the first years of his exile some instinct had directed him to the very best investments, and while he slept, and scarcely cared for his ventures, they had grown steadily in value. He had been a very rich man ten years before the war, and he knew that his interest had been rolling heavily up. Now there was an urgent need for gold, and he drew it generously and without a thought of his own profit or advantage. But Christopher could not do an imprudent thing in business, his plans were carefully and wisely laid; and in twenty weeks from the time when his great white-roofed waggons left, loaded with cotton, for the Rio Grande, they returned, loaded with coffee and sugar and dry goods for the settlements in Comal and Benders counties.

The journey was a severe one for Christopher,

but he did not need to take it again. While there he organised a regular waggon-train, which he put under a paid guard of Lipans and Mexicans. The labours attending this enterprise, even in the settlements, were great, and, perhaps fortunately for Christopher, compelled him into active life. He had no time for unsatisfactory reflections and unprofitable regrets.

One day he was sitting smoking his afternoon pipe under Haney's verandah. He was alone. Of all the old crowd he only was left. Some were killed, some away, some fled to avoid a military service in which their hearts were not engaged. The few young men who loafed about the village were invalids or scouts on some special duty. The streets were almost deserted; everything had a dreary, decaying, melancholy look. As Christopher mused sadly on these changes, Haney drew a chair near to him and sat down for a talk.

"Your new enterprise must make you lots of gold, Christopher—between the cotton and the goods."

"Yes, it does."

"You don't seem to care about it."

"Yes, I do care. Gold is a very good thing if it is put to a proper use."

"Well, I can tell you of a rare good bargain, and you can do a kindness to a poor lady at the same time."

"I can't see that, Haney. If it is good for me 'tain't at all likely 'twill be for her."

"Well, consider for yourself. It's Judge Terry's house and four-acre lot. Best house in three counties, and grounds well laid out, if they be a bit neglected."

"Is it for sale?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"Madame is very poor—reckon her and the young ladies will feel it pretty tough—powerful proud women. And the boys! I'm more 'an sorry for them. They looked that shabby to-day, and as if they hadn't had enough to eat for a year. I called 'em in and made 'em stay dinner. I thought of their father, how proud he was of them thar boys, and of him crying 'Second Texas!' with his last breath, and I felt oncommon queer, I can tell you. 'Twould be a good thing if the widow could get rid of that big house."

"I thought she was left with plenty?"

"Of land and negroes. Now, Christopher, what is land worth to-day? They can't turn it into crops or gold, and they can't eat nor wear it. As for the servants, I reckon they are only another care. The able-bodied men have all been conscripted, and are on the fortifications at Galveston. The women don't 'mount to much; ef they keep themselves it's 'bout all, though I reckon their wage is all the ready money madame ever sees now. I can tell you I'm real sorry for them, and I thought, as you owned 'bout all the houses on that street, you might want the judge's."

"I do not want it."

Then he shook the ashes out of his pipe, and asked Haney to have his pony saddled. "I've got to see Baylor," he added, "but my business with him won't keep me ten minutes."

Baylor was the factor through whom all the farmers and planters round managed their business. He turned their cattle and cotton into gold for them, and he loaned and invested money with admirable prudence and honesty. There was not a rancher or a planter between the Colorado and the Rio Grande who did not confide in Baylor. Christopher found him in his store, and, drawing him aside a little, said, "Baylor, I want you to do me a favour."

"Anything within my power, you know I will."

"I have just heard that Judge Terry's house is for sale, and his widow in a hard place—she is quite without money—that means everything, I guess. Now, for reasons known only to myself, and of which she has not the faintest conception, I want her to have all the comforts that are reasonable at such a time as this. How much a month will that be?"

"With the hire of her three spare servants, seventy-five dollars is a fair allowance."

"You are sure that is sufficient?"

"It is more than any other family in this section has; I'll bet you five dollars on that."

"I don't bet, Baylor; you know that. But I want the madame to have enough—without extravagance, I'm against nonsense in these sorrowful times."

"You are right, sir. And, to tell the truth, the madame was always free-handed in her house."

"Never mind that now; I know nothing about madame's house—never was inside it, but at Robert Moray's wedding—people have to spend at a wedding. But don't you let her suspicion who the money comes from, that's all; I don't want to have her feelings hurt."

"Bless you, Christopher! you can't hurt madame's feelings with money. Excuse me, but if you knew—"

"I don't know, and I don't really care to know anything about madame's peculiarities; but I am loth to think of those pretty girls and those fine little fellows missing their father so sorely. Now, Baylor, I've put a good many thousand dollars your way, and if you want to do me a genuine favour you'll attend to this matter now—I mean this very hour."

"I'll send seventy-five dollars before five o'clock, Christopher."

"Thank you. That's all. Good night."

Poor Clarissa was sitting with her girls and boys at this very time in mournful conversation. Their separation seemed inevitable. Lulu and Violet must go to their aunt in Austin, and Jack to an uncle in Burnet; then she would only have Stephen and Matt to provide for. It seemed to the mother and children a dreadful alternative—all the worse that the house was to be sold and the pleasant home for ever broken up.

"Here is a letter, mamma," said Lulu, "and Baylor's boy waits for an answer."

She opened the letter and read, and then re-read it. Her face flushed, great tears gathered in her eyes, she clasped Jack to her breast, and said, in a voice broken and low with emotion, "Oh, children, we are saved! Listen to what Baylor says:—

"Madame,—I am authorised to pay to you, as Judge Terry's widow, the sum of seventy-five dollars, gold, monthly, until such time as the condition of the country enables you to realise the proper value of the estate left by the late Judge Terry. The friend for whom I am acting desires you to preserve your homestead, and you are not to consider yourself under any obligation, the obligation being, he says, entirely on his side. Please to give the bearer a receipt for seventy-five dollars."

"JOHN BAYLOR."

Long did the happy family sit and speculate that night on their unknown helper. Jack, who had yet lofty ideas of human nature, was inclined to believe that Baylor, reflecting on the large sums he had made from the Terry ranches, had felt bound in honour to assist them in their extremity. Violet said, in a whisper, "Perhaps some one who had wronged papa in his spasmodic fits of gambling had felt sorry for them, and was taking this way to repay his theft." And even Clarissa could come no nearer to the truth than to suppose "it might be some horse-thief whose life the judge had spared."

Any way, it was a timely and gracious help, and Baylor smiled when he saw Clarissa out riding again every afternoon, and heard that his wife had been invited to a little party at Madame Terry's. "Christopher's money," he murmured, a little angrily, "but the children are nice children. I wonder, in all creation, what made Christopher do it! Reckon Terry scored the obligation in some Indian fight. But if Christopher is in the humour of giving, madame will keep him employed, I'll bet my last dollar on that."

Baylor's supposition seemed likely to be a true one. In three months madame wrote seven letters to her unknown friend. Two were indeed notes of gratitude; other two requested an addition of twenty-five dollars a month; two subsequent asked for a special loan; and the last suggested that if the unknown friend was under an obligation, which he thought fit to pay in instalments, the widow would prefer to receive the whole sum at once.

Christopher read them with a gravity that betrayed no symptom of any kind of feeling.

"Madame is importunate and insatiable," said Baylor.

"Give her the hundred dollars a month. She knows best what she requires, I reckon." About the loan he was as dour as a Scot can be. "I never lend money," he said, "and I have none to give in this case." Her final request pained him exceedingly, but he would not let Baylor see that it did so. "Tell her," he said, "her last request is impossible, and that I am very sorry to refuse it."

"You are the best-natured fellow, Christopher."

"You don't know what you are talking about, Baylor; so don't give me credit I don't deserve. If it had been a man it would have been different. Women need so many things, and they have such a hard time—and it never does any good to dispute with them; sooner or later you are ashamed and sorry for it."

"I wonder what her next request will be?"

Christopher made no answer. He looked at the clock and rose, nodded his head to Baylor, untied his pony, and was just going to mount him, when he saw the doctor coming rapidly up the street.

Christopher's first thought was Robert. Had Inez heard bad tidings? Was anything wrong? With the bridle in his hand he waited till the doctor reached him.

"Where are you for, doctor?"

"Madame Terry's."

"What is the matter?"

"She is dying, I fear."

"Wait, I must go with you."

They went into the house together. Christopher waited until the doctor joined him again, and said, sadly,

"She may live till morning, but she is sinking fast."

"What is the matter?"

"A chill—and pneumonia. I was sent for too late."

"Doctor, I must see her, and see her alone. Can you manage this for me? It is of the greatest importance. Tell her the person for whom Baylor has acted wishes to see her—alone."

"If it is really important, Christopher—but if not, it is wicked to vex her further with the cares of life."

"Doctor, I thought you knew me. I tell you this is of the gravest interest to her."

"Forgive me, Christopher, I will tell her."

In a few moments the doctor beckoned him to a door looking on to the western verandah.

"Go in, I am afraid you are too late to be understood. I will stay here; if anything is needed call me."

Then Christopher entered the death-room. It was a large, handsome chamber, cool and white. The evening breeze stirred gently the lace curtains at the window, towards which the dying woman's eyes were turned. She hardly noticed his entrance; her breathing was slow and heavy, and her eyes fixed on the setting sun.

"Clarissa! Oh! Clarissa, forgive me!"

She never made a cry. Slowly she turned her eyes, but there was no light of recognition in them. Still undoubtedly the voice touched some sensitive chord in her soul.

"Jamie!" she said, in feeble, broken tones. "Oh, Jamie, but I'm glad—I'm glad you're come hame. I've been sair troubled since yon night I went awa wi' wee Robert from you. It was a wicked thing, Jamie, and I hae had a sair repenting."

"God knows that I forgive all, Clarissa! Oh! my dear Clarissa, if you could only understand!"

She smiled, but it was a smile without intelligence for him. "You were aye too gude for me, Jamie; but I sought you wearily. Do you mind Archie Blythe? I met him in New York, and he said you had come to Texas. I sought you day and night. I prayed God to send you to me, but you've been long coming, Jamie—long coming. I thought you were dead! I thought you were dead; and I used to wake up at midnight and

think about my sin. I hae been a weak, weak woman. Christ pity me! Christ pity me!"

Christopher wept bitterly. He soothed her with the gentlest and most pitiful words. He took her hand, and, kneeling by her side, prayed as men in such extremities do pray. He told the dying woman over and over that he forgave all, that he would care for every one of her children, that they should want no good thing he could give them, and he pointed her in solemn words to "Him who taketh away the sins of the world." And she wept gently, and smiled softly as a child whom its mother comforteth.

About the middle of the night she said, almost in her natural voice, "I hear the wimpling of the burn, and I feel the breeze coming o'er the broom and the wild thyme, and I hear the Sabbath bell, Jamie. Oh, but it rings clearly!—and I hear them raising the psalm; but I'll never see Jamie again—never again—and it's my fault, it's my fault. Oh, Jamie! Jamie!"

"Clarissa!"

The love and anguish, the regrets and forgiveness of thirty years were in the one word. Its intensity recalled her for a moment, and a gleam of recognition came into her face. One great tear—the last she would ever shed—rolled slowly down the cheek almost clay. Christopher solemnly and tenderly kissed away this last sad show of life and love and sorrow, and then, weeping like a child, he called in the doctor and her household. There was no further struggle; an awful silence reigned for a few moments, and then with a faint sigh the spirit fled.

Christopher was easily persuaded to stay with the children. Upon receiving the doctor's message a spirit of gratitude had made them accede to his request. Now Jack came frankly forward and spoke for all. "Mr. Christopher, we did not know until now whose hand had supplied our wants, but we are very glad it was yours." And the girls brought him a cup of coffee and made his pillows soft on the sofa, and spoke kindly to him. He let them. He felt strangely in need of sympathy, and even the doctor's rougher care was very pleasant to him.

In the morning the doctor went for Inez, and Christopher took upon himself the ordering of the funeral. The plainest necessities were not easily procured, all else was out of the question. Then, in that solemn light between sunset and moonrise, Clarissa's friends carried her to her grave.

Inez was to remain with Lulu and Violet a few days, and Christopher, before leaving, took Jack aside, and said,

"Jack, you are now to take your father's and mother's place. Stick to your home, and keep together till the war is over. Baylor will pay you the usual amount. No, no, don't say a word, Jack; you may be sure I have the right as well as the will to do what I do. Some day you may know all, in the meantime come to me for any help or advice you want."

He rode home with the doctor, who seemed much inclined to talk of the dead lady. "She spoke the broadest Scotch from the moment she



became insensible," he said, thoughtfully, "and she seemed to forget all her late life."

"She was Scotch," said Christopher, softly, "and our people under any trouble or great emotion aye go back to their mother tongue."

"And you are Scotch also?"

"I am Scotch also. We came from the same place."

"Oh! ah! I see. Christopher, what a true, tender old fellow you are! I dare say you once loved her."

"She was the only woman I ever loved; but that was a' over lang syne. Think no wrong, doctor; she did not know I was alive, nor did I know that she was in America until just before Robert Moray's marriage. I saw her then for a few moments, and I saw her on her death-bed—that is all."

"Her name before her second marriage was Moray?"

"Yes, and mine is Moray—James Christopher Moray."

"Then you are relatives?"

"All the Morays are kin. If I met one at Timbuctoo I should know he was my cousin, more or less removed."

"You Scots count kinship far."

"There's One that counts it farther, even God, the Father of us all."

Some influence of time and circumstance induced the doctor to continue the conversation in a religious strain; for there comes a time in every man's life when he is impelled to look his eternal destiny in the face. As they rode together over the prairie they spoke of faith, and of immortality, and the things pertaining to it. Christopher spoke as one seeing things invisible; the doctor reasoned and doubted, but still he was deeply touched, and the argument begun that night was lifted at nearly every subsequent meeting, and every day grew more full of interest to both men.

There were few lives in those years which did not suffer a great change. Christopher's was not exempt. The silent, serene man, dreaming through regretful years, had become alert and cheerful, with hands full of business and a heart encompassed with loving cares. Even the log cabin had felt the change. Jack and Stephen Terry were frequently there for days together. They coaxed the old man to go hunting with them, and to tell them stories of Indian fights. The walls and shelves held all sorts of boyish treasures, and odds and ends of boyish garments. Inez and Lulu and Violet also came, and, whether he would or not, took him away with them. They made him put on his best clothes, and they brushed his hair to suit themselves, and exercised over him all those petty and pretty tyrannies that men so dearly like from those they love. They coaxed him to send for ribbons and fineries, and even to leave his business and take them into San Antonia. But, however unreasonable their demands, Christopher could not refuse them. Love had come so late into his life, he could not bear to darken one smile or lose one pleasant word.

Perhaps he was at this time happier than ever

he had been before; but Inez, whom he talked confidentially to, knew that his brightest days were darkened by the absence and silence of Robert. "But he'll come back, dearie," he would say when he saw her weeping, "I know he will come back."

At length, in the beginning of 1865, there was a whisper of the end. Ben Archer, a member of Robert's company, had been seen at El Paso, and through him they heard that Robert, after the defeat at Fort Union, had made his way over mountains and deserts into Arizona. Archer thought he had joined a Mexican company trading between Tucson and Senora, and did not doubt but he would return as soon as he considered it safe to do so.

So the time wore on, and, in spite of all, not unhappily, and the midsummer was again over the lovely land. One day Inez, Lulu, and Violet went to spend the day with Christopher. They wanted some ribbon, and they easily induced him to ride to the village for it. As he was getting the ribbon, Lavenburg opened a case of muslins, and he bought each of the girls a new dress, and then with the presents in his saddle-bag rode happily home. He was amply rewarded in their innocent delight, and in listening to them discuss the colours and patterns most becoming to each. He was not insensible either to the good supper they made him, nor to the pleasure of sitting down to a cleanly cheerful meal, with three happy girls, full of questions, and merry chatter, and kind thoughtfulness.

The moon was so bright that the girls finished their sewing in its light, and then Christopher prepared to escort them to the doctor's. They were a happy party, none the less so that they were silent, and let the beauty and peace of the night sink into their hearts. Suddenly Christopher said, "I hear the gallop of a horse."

"Likely," said Inez. "Papa has four hundred down at present."

"But this is the gallop of one controlled by a rider. See, yonder the rider comes. A Mexican, I reckon; he rides like one."

"Or an Indian," said Lulu.

"If an Indian he is a friendly one, and perhaps he may bring us news from Robert."

"It is Robert!" screamed Inez. "It is Robert! Nobody rides like that but Robert. I know it is Robert!" On came the horseman, riding like an Apache, straight as an arrow, swift as the wind.

"Stand still, dears," said Christopher; "we shall soon know. Yes, it is Robert."

Then Inez rushed wildly to meet him, and in a few moments he was the centre of the group. Under other circumstances he might have wondered to meet his half-sisters with Christopher, but at this joyful moment nothing was singular. He had found his wife and his home again after four such weary years. That was the great miracle; all else were but parts of it. For a moment poor Christopher felt a pang of jealousy. Every one was kissed and noticed before him, but he soon recovered his good-humour. How could Robert do different, knowing nothing of their true

relation? And Lulu and Violet were his half-sisters; it was all natural enough. But his love had not a long trial; before they reached the doctor's Robert found a moment in which to throw his arm round the old man's shoulders, and whisper to him that he had "never forgotten him, and had kept all the promises he made."

Robert had brought news very welcome to all. Peace was virtually made, and men were at liberty again to rebuild their ruined homes and fortunes. Christopher had long had a proposal to make, which he thought it well no longer to delay. The old Romans watched the flight of eagles in order to select a site for a city; Christopher had watched the gathering together of horses and horsemen. Now just beyond the doctor's was a series of rising knolls, well wooded, and with unfailing springs, and here it had become very usual to bring horses for sale, or to rest after long journeys. It would be a splendid site for a future town, and Christopher resolved to lay the foundations of it. He had already large quantities of the goods needed for frontier trading. He would build as rapidly as possible a store at this point. It would be a great convenience to the horsemen who already frequented it, and it would also bring others there. Robert should be a great trader.

"It is not what I would have liked my son to be," and he thought sadly of old Marischal, "but it's better than fighting; and life is but a step at a time."

This plan was at once carried into effect, and as it was progressing the doctor said,

"Christopher, what are you going to do with the stone-work you prepared for Robert's house, when you thought of building it on the creek?"

"I have my plans for that, doctor, and I shall want your help in them. The foundation of a building forty-two feet by thirty-two is laid, and there is a deal of stone cut and ready for the mortar. The location is a central one. I am going to finish it for a church. We must have a church in our town, doctor."

"I'm agreeable; but we must have the vote of the neighbours round, or they won't come to it."

"Then call a meeting at your house, and we'll go to work at once."

So the eleven householders within a distance of about four miles received each a note requesting them to be at the doctor's at five o'clock the following Tuesday. All of them promptly attended. No one doubted but that the call related to politics. Christopher rather surprised them when he stated the object of the meeting, and at first his proposal was met in a very discouraging way. Some smiled sarcastically, others shook their heads with an unpleasant decision. Finally one old man, the most unlikely man of all, said,

"Gentlemen, I'm for the church. I don't say as I'd go to it myself, but I'd like my four girls to go, and my wife is allays a-hankering after a Sunday and a church."

"I s'pose now," said another, "ef Chris likes to build a church he might do it. Ef he wanted to build a bar thar would be no kind of objection. It's a free country, I s'pose, gentlemen—leastways, it allays has been."

"Don't see in thunder what we are asked about it for!" said Colonel Ben Williamson. "Ef I wanted to build a church—which I don't—I'd build it, you bet I would. It's Christopher's own business, I take it."

"No, gentlemen," said Christopher, "it is your business. I propose to build the church and give it to the new town free of debt. But you will have to keep it open."

"Run it, you mean? Now, whar in thunder—"

"I mean, you must pay the minister. If you don't you will never go and hear him. But let each man give twenty head of cattle a year towards his pay, and he'll go and hear if he is worth it; and I do think, gentlemen, the man who goes once will go again."

"Twenty head of cattle—that's about a hundred dollars a year!"

"And you often risk fifty head on the speed of a race-horse or the election of a constable."

"That's so," said the doctor, warmly. "I'll give twenty head to start the salary."

"I'll go it double," said an old Texan cattleman. "I never was in church all my life, but I can remember my mother praying, and sometimes I kind o' think I remember a prayer she taught me."

"Colonel," said the doctor to a big, fat, fair man, with an unwriteable Slav name, "what do you say?"

"I have seen no churches since thirty years, but very good are they. Let the church be built; and the minister, let him come, and also the schoolmaster."

"The school, by all means," said another, eagerly. "It can be taught in the church."

"No," answered Christopher—"no, sir, it cannot. The house of God is the house of God, and not a school-house. It is to be a little spot in this good land which He has given us, purposely set aside to praise His name in. As far as possible, we ought to leave our sinful thoughts and bad words and angry passions outside it. Now boys and girls are boys and girls, not angels; and teachers are teachers, and not consecrated ministers. We want a church that is all of a church. But I'll build a school-house gladly, and every one can give thirty head of cattle instead of twenty, that will pay minister and teacher both."

There was some more discussion, but it ended very harmoniously, and Christopher went heartily to work. In eight months the two buildings were completed, and Christopher's foresight had been abundantly vindicated in the site of his settlement. Robert's store was already surrounded by small houses, a temporary hotel, and a bar-room. But the church and the school-house were on the ground also; the minister had been "called," and one lovely Sabbath morning the following spring the blessed church-bell rung out gladly over the flowery prairie. At least twenty buggies and a number of saddle-horses were fastened to the fence. Within the church the women had ranged themselves on one side, and were busy with their fans; on the other side sat the men, just as busy with their tobacco. In some cases the ladies of the

family were alone in the building, and their husbands or brothers waited outside for them. In fact, the general feeling among the men in regard to church was that of a concession to female prejudices. But it was a good day to Christopher, for he saw in it the promise of the future years.\*

In the meantime other changes had taken place. Lulu and Violet Terry had both married, Jack had gone to a famous law school, Stephen and Matt were with Christopher. Christopher's life, once so empty, had grown full of love and enterprise, and those who had been familiar with him for twenty years said that he had recovered his youth. It was known by all that he had adopted Robert Moray, and so no one wondered at the pleasant word "father," so often on Robert's lips, and all smiled to hear the pretty Inez call him "Papa Christopher." To Robert only Christopher revealed the true relation between them. Clarissa's memory lived in the hearts of her children and friends without a shadow.

This was the harvest of Christopher's life and patience, and I left him gathering it, living joyfully before his God, and prudently working for the elevation of the people with whom he had cast his lot. If I had heard no more of him, I should have known that "all was well." But a few years afterwards circumstances again took me into the country west of San Antonio. The settlement of Moray had become a town of 3,000 inhabitants, and when the stage stopped at the handsome, commodious hotel I found the doctor was its proprietor. Very pleasant indeed was our meeting, and he had not a single word of bad news to tell me. I remembered the rather noisy settlement, with its wild *vangueros* and horse-traders and cow-boys, and I could not help contrasting the memory with the quiet, orderly, pretty town.

"Yes," said the doctor, with a pleasant laugh, "we are a very respectable community. We have

all paid our thirty head of cattle regular; I reckon that accounts for it."

I asked after Robert. He was "doing splendidly, and mayor of the town." Inez was handsomer than in her youth, and they had four beautiful children. Jack Terry was married, and holding a fine position in Austin; Stephen was at Yale; and "Where do you think little Matt has gone?" asked the doctor.

I guessed in a moment—"Scotland."

"That's so—to some old college in Aberdeen."

"Well, Christopher can afford it."

"You bet he can. He's a very rich man, and I guess he knows what he's doing—every time."

"I am sure he does. Robert has enough too."

"Well—yes—but Robert has a big family. There's Christopher, and Alexander, and Inez, and Clarissa—"

"How happy Christopher must be! He loved children so truly."

"Happy! I should think he was! His cabin is always full of them. It's their favourite playground. Lulu's and Violet's children are often there also, and every child in the town goes to Christopher if it is in trouble. Why, he brought a whole waggon-load of toys last Christmas, he did really, and it was a perfect delight to see him at the school festival. I declare I'm sorry for the boys and girls that don't know Christopher."

Later, I went out to see the old man. He was sitting in his cabin door feeding his squirrels. They were on his shoulders, and on his knees, and in his breast, and in his pockets, and playing all sorts of capers in the vines above his head. At a word from him they scampered off into the trees. I never saw a happier old man. The world was full of love to him; the future full of a glorious hope.

"Good-bye, dear," were the last words I heard him say. "Good-bye, dear, we shall hardly meet again. I hope to go home soon."

## WOMEN AS CIVIL SERVANTS.

THE great and increasing demand among women for remunerative employment calls for repeated discussion of their prospects as members of the working community. This being so, we venture to bring once more before the public their position as servants in a great department of the Civil Service—namely, the Post Office.

Moreover, it is one of the most encouraging prospects before women that this branch of industry makes promise of further development, for the occupations open to their sex are few in number and hard to obtain; and it is well that the female section of the community should be cheered by watching the successful efforts of their sisters in this important sphere of action, and by

reviewing the excellent results which women as "civil servants" achieve.

Ten years ago the Clearing House, a branch of the Receiver and Accountant-General's Office, was opened to female officers, the idea being to give employment to ladies in reduced circumstances. Sir John Tilley first suggested that these clerkships should be filled by gentlewomen, and Lord John Manners, then Postmaster-General, favoured the plan, and took much interest in the nominations. In the year 1872 the staff commenced with thirty members, and gradually their numbers have been increased, and their work now embraces that of the Clearing House, the greater part of the Examiner's Branch of the Savings Bank, and the Postal Orders Examining Branch.

The clerks, who number nearly two hundred, enter upon a six months' probation after passing an examination in arithmetic, dictation,

\* This story certainly gives a true representation of Texan life. Let us hope that with advancing time the influence of Christian teaching will remove some of its ruder features, and introduce a higher tone of principle and feeling.—ED. L. H.



handwriting, and grammar, under the Civil Service Commissioners, at Cannon Row or Burlington House; and at the end of that time, if their health and conduct are considered satisfactory, a report is sent in to the authorities by the superintendent, and they are fully established as second-class clerks. The salary commences from the day of entry, and is £65 a year, rising by £3 to £80 for a second-class clerk; £85 rising by £5 to £110 for a first-class clerk; and £110 rising to £170 for a principal clerk. The age of admission is between seventeen to twenty. The hours of attendance are from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; and the holidays consist of a free afternoon on Saturday and a calendar month some time during the year.

The Clearing House is situated at No. 1, Albion Place, Blackfriars Bridge, and it will be remembered that this was the first branch of the Post Office in which ladies were engaged. The work has to do with telegrams, and every telegram sent throughout the United Kingdom is forwarded here from the General Post Office for examination, so it is no sinecure. In the Press section on the ground-floor all unpaid telegrams are received which are sent by those papers, agencies, clubs, exchanges, and news-rooms which have made arrangements with the Postmaster-General for the transmission of news. Above this room is the section for the examination of messages for small charges. All paid telegrams are counted here, and examined to see that the right number of stamps have been affixed, and that such words as "cui bono?" or names like "fly-by-night," have not been counted as one word. The daily average of mistakes is about one hundred and fifty. The Government Account section occupies the third floor, and consists of the postmasters' abstract work—namely, daily account of the number of messages each postmaster has sent out, and the commission he claims. This work varies in quantity, the messages increasing in wet weather and decreasing on bright sunny days. During the great snowfall in January, 1881, 97,143 more messages were sent than during the same week of the previous year. In the highest room the Government messages, and those of the Queen and her family, are counted, and charged to the different offices and to the Controllers of the Royal Households.

The Examiner's Branch of the Savings Bank, in which ladies are employed, occupies a floor of the new building in Queen Victoria Street, and the staff numbers over one hundred and thirty ladies. A private staircase leads up to this part of the building, and a dining-room and kitchen are attached to it. The work is in three sections, and a fourth has been added by the Act for Investments in Government Stock. In the first section the signatures of depositors who withdraw money from the Savings Bank are examined, etc. In the second the daily dockets of postmasters are received, and the dates, etc., are examined. In the third the allowances to postmasters are counted, etc. This section is the most difficult in point of brainwork, the greatest nicety in calculation being required in tracing the smallest error. It is, therefore, the last section into which the clerks

are introduced while learning gradually the whole of the work, in order that they may be ready to fill any vacancies caused by illness or other reasons of absence among their members.

The section for Investments in Government Stock was commenced by six female clerks under the direction of men, and although the difficulties they had to encounter were greater than any they had previously experienced, their duties were accomplished to the satisfaction of their teachers, who bear testimony that little trouble was evinced by the women in understanding the work, and who speak in the highest terms of the way in which it was done. The clerks in this section deal with the applications for investments in Government Stock, etc.

The Postal Orders Examining Branch began in January, 1881, at the Clearing House, and has been moved to 111, Queen Victoria Street. The work here is comparatively easy, as it consists in checking the receipts of postmasters' dockets in a book, in examining each order to see that it is signed by the payee, in entering the amount of any postage-stamps affixed in books, etc., etc.

It will be seen that the work in which these women are engaged is not mere manual labour, but requires careful application, as well as skill of hand. One careless mistake involves endless trouble, for the accounts are kept with such precision, that one penny miscalculated has to be searched for through numberless papers until it is checked. The hours are not long, but every hour spent in the office, except the dinner half-hour, is persistently employed, and the tension put on the powers of the officers is too great to last over a longer time. Some few of the clerks are advised to retire after a six months' probation if it is found that, although they could pass the examination, they have not the quickness necessary for the work; but the greater number remain, and advance gradually, the berths being too highly appreciated to be left for other employments.

In contrasting the work of the women with that of the men in the Post Office, the authorities say that the women are more conscientious, and take a greater interest in their occupation.

This is perhaps only too easily accounted for when it is remembered the class of women who are here employed.

These three branches of the Post Office were opened to women with the express intention of giving occupation to ladies, and as each appointment was made by the Postmaster-General, this rule was strictly adhered to. The women in the Telegraph Department and other Post-Office work were distinct from these clerks, and their social position was not inquired into when they were admitted. But these special clerks were not born with the prospect of work lying before them, and many a sad history is connected with their entrance on official life. The young men in the Post Office spend their time in exercise or amusement when the hours of work are over; many of the women go home to continue their exertions in some other form. The salary is small, and one tries to increase it by giving lessons, another by sewing, a third by drudgery of a domestic kind. The continuous

close application is often found a relief from pressing thoughts of great sorrow or loneliness, or there may perhaps be anxiety to rise as rapidly as possible in the section that a larger salary may be obtained. The clerks in some cases have others depending upon them. Lodgings, where two idiot brothers were her only companions, was the home of one woman last year; another lived in a solitary attic near London Bridge. It is a subject of rejoicing that comfortable lodgings are now provided at a reasonable rate for these officers, and that they have only to apply to the kind and thoughtful ladies at the head of their several departments in order to find a suitable home.

The number of female clerks employed is, as we have said, largely increasing. The Act for Investments in Government Stock, and the Postal Money Orders Act, have created two new fields for their efforts. The authorities are pleased with their work, and willing to enlarge their numbers. The Postmaster-General, speaking of the staff of officers in his report for 1875, when women were first admitted to the Savings Bank, says, "As a further extension of female employment in the Post Office, there is now a class of female clerks in the Savings Bank. Although in arithmetic, at least, the standard of acquirement is high, a majority of the candidates succeed in passing the examination." That women clerks have gained in favour is proved by the rapid extension of their field of operation. All this points to an increased demand for their services, and holds out hopeful prospects of their being admitted to more branches of the Post Office and other Government offices.

But if the office work grows harder, and becomes of a more complicated nature, it necessarily follows that only clever and capable women will be able to pursue it.

What is to become of those who possess little ability, and who nevertheless are forced to provide for themselves? The dearth of employment is so great everywhere, that ladies cannot do better, it seems to us, than take advantage of everything open to them, and thankfully accept all positions, making as light of the attendant discomforts as they possibly can. If the best clerkships are out of their reach, let them be content to enter lower branches of the service, such as the Central Telegraph Office, the Return Letter Office, or even the post-offices in London or the country.

The Central Telegraph Office employs a mixed staff of some 1,533 officers, about 933 of which are men, and about 600 are women. They enter at the age of fourteen to eighteen, in order that they may acquire the necessary manipulatory skill while their fingers are supple; and after passing an examination in arithmetic, writing, and dictation, are sent to the School of Telegraphy, and learn to work the various instruments—the Wheatstone, Duplex, Sounder, Quadruple, Morse, and Single Needle. When proficient, which is generally in about three months' time, they are drafted off to the Central Office as vacancies occur. At first they perform minor duties, and assist the officers in charge; but when able to work alone they receive the sole care of an instrument. They sit in one large room—boys, girls, men, and women together

—and help one another when stress of work calls for two clerks at one instrument. The women work eight hours daily, coming on in relays between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. They have a whole holiday on Sunday, and no night duty.

The bulk of the daily traffic is from 40,000 to 50,000 messages, and a large number of these are transmitted messages, and have to be received or forwarded, and therefore should practically be counted twice in the total. Besides this there are from 5,000 to 6,000 local London messages, and a vast number of news messages. The greater part of the work is done between the hours of eleven and three, a lull occurring in the afternoon. The work is a barometer of business, varying from day to day, and increasing largely on race days, heavy Parliamentary days, or when any matter of general interest takes place.

Dinner is served on the premises in separate rooms, the department providing fires and extras, also tea at four o'clock in the Instrument Room.

Considering the amount of work they perform, and the absence of night and Sunday duty, the salary of the women is good, being eight shillings a week when first admitted, and rising gradually to £78 a year. The supervising officers are paid higher. The manipulatory skill is found largely among them, and in time they become accustomed to the noise of the machinery and the excitement of the employment. Every possible care is taken of their comfort, and the rooms devoted to their use are perfect in arrangement.

Another department of the Post Office is the Return Letter Office, in Telegraph Street. Fifty-five women or more are employed here in returning lost letters to the senders, and destroying letters in cases where the discovery of the names of the writers seems hopeless. The letters lost during a year average one in twenty—2,013,149 in all. Of these about 1,759,748 are returned and the rest destroyed. The postcards lost are about 71,754, and about 39,649 are returned, and the same is the yearly average for newspapers and circulars. All articles lost in the post are sent here, and the cupboards are filled with such things as cheap jewellery, shoes, and even umbrellas, and at Christmas, Easter, and Valentine's Day with badly-packed cards and presents. These things are kept for three months, and then sold by the Post Office auctioneer. The work of the whole staff is about 7,000 letters daily, each member being obliged to return 280 letters, and a larger number if she is dealing with postcards, papers, or circulars. The hours are from half-past nine to five, and a half-holiday on Saturday. The salary is eighteen shillings to twenty shillings weekly for a first-class clerk, and fourteen shillings to seventeen shillings for a second-class clerk.

The female telegraphists engaged in the post-offices of London and the large provincial towns are between one and two thousand, and they work at the same rate of pay and the same number of hours as in the Central Telegraph Office. They are trained in the Postal Telegraph Schools, after passing an examination under the Civil Service Commissioners, and as yet must obtain nominations to their posts through the interest of friends.

They are never allowed to remain after eight in the evening, and during the day work behind partitions which screen them from the public; but, all the same, they are obliged to sell the stamps, postcards, and orders required, as well as to do the wire-work. They have generally a small room joining the office where they eat their dinner, and here they sit for tea and retire when off duty. The eight hours' work leaves them free to employ the evenings as they please, and to engage in other occupations if not too tired.

A pension can be hoped for after ten years' service in the Post Office if a clerk is disabled; and this is something to fall back upon as old age creeps on, and prevents undue saving in the present under dread of exigencies in the future. Women as Civil servants are the children of the Government, and thus they have the comfort of knowing that they are not likely to be turned away when their powers are exhausted, or to be ungratefully forgotten when their services are of no further use.

M. E. HARKNESS.



### MR. GLADSTONE'S LATIN HYMNS.

#### ROCK OF AGES.

MR. GLADSTONE'S Latin version of Top-lady's familiar hymn, "Rock of Ages," was written in 1848. Many of our readers will be glad to have the lines reproduced in these pages, and we give them by special permission.

Jesus, pro me perforatus,  
Condar intra Tuum latus:  
Tu, per lympham profluentem,  
Tu, per sanguinem tepentem,  
In peccata mī redunda,  
Tolle culpam, sordes munda.

Coram Te, nec justus forem  
Quamvis totā vi laborem;  
Nec si fide nunquam cesso,  
Fletu stillans indefesso:  
Tibi soli tantum munus,  
Salva Tu, Salvator unus.

Nil in manu mecum fero  
Sed me versus Crucem gero;  
Vestimenta nudus oro,  
Opem debilis imploro;  
Fontem Christi quæro immundus,  
Nisi laves, moribundus.

Dum hos artus Vita regit,  
Quando nox sepulchro tegit,  
Mortuos cum stare jubes,  
Sedens Judex inter nubes,  
Jesus, pro me perforatus,  
Condar intra Tuum latus.

#### HYMNUS RESPONSORIUS.

"Art thou weary? Art thou languid?"

Scis te lassum? Scis languentem?  
Luctu contristaris?

Audin', "Veni, veniens que  
Pace perfruaris."

Notas habet quas agnōrim,  
Istum consecratus?  
"Manus, plantæ cruentatæ,  
Cruentatum latus."

Ecquid portat pro coronâ,  
Quæ monarchas ornat?  
"Diadema, sed spinarum,  
Frontem hanc adornat."

Sin obnitar, sin attingam,  
Qui remunerabit?  
"Luctûs, fletûs ac laborum  
Largitatem dabit."

Sin obstrictus adhærebo,  
Quis in fine status?  
"Viæ meta, luctûs fuga,  
Labor exantlatus."

Si receptum supplicāssim,  
Votum exaudiret?  
"Quanquam terra, quanquam cœlum  
In ruinam iret."

Persistentem, perluctantem  
Certus est beare?  
"Vates quisque, martyr, virgo,  
Angelus, testare."





## VENICE.

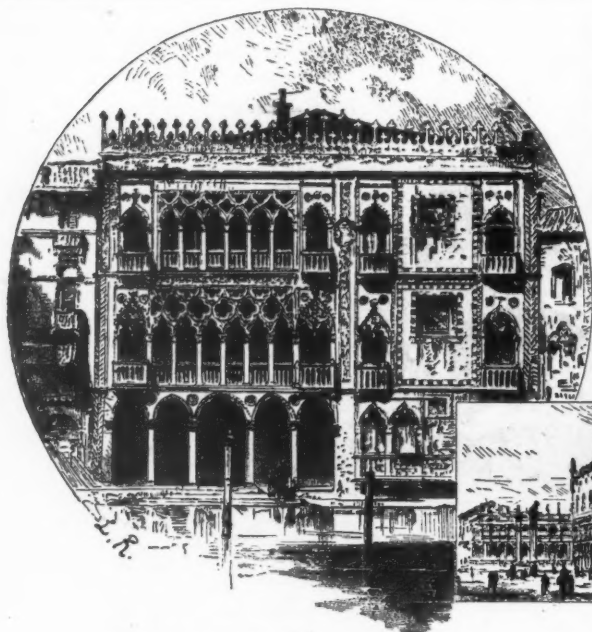
WE left Florence very early on a day so hot, that at eight in the morning the sun was almost intolerable. We passed Pistoia—the little city standing compact amidst the green landscape looked so like the model which the Patron Saint of a city holds in his hand, that one felt as though one could take it up bodily—and then we soon began to approach the Apennines. The railway crosses them by scores of tunnels, out of which we flashed every now and then into a few moments of dazzling sunshine, to see a brief vision of torrent and rock and hanging wood—and then back again into another of the most stifling tunnels I ever experienced. They were even worse than the Metropolitan Railway at Portland Road. It was impossible to breathe the foul air of these tunnels, but when we shut the windows there seemed to be no air to breathe at all. No one whose lungs are affected should ever attempt that journey—at any rate, in summer weather. I do not know if it is as bad at other times.

But the glimpses we caught, between the tunnels, of the very heart of the Apennines were ravishing—great sunny sides of rock, bush-grown and water-stained—broad shallow streams flowing over pebbly beds—trees darkly, richly green, growing in seeming impossible places, all steeped in a glory of colour, so warm and joyous that the wild mountain landscape seemed to be laughing in the sun. We were being stewed, broiled, baked, and suffocated, but we remember our sufferings very vaguely now—as we look back on that day, we

seem to be always just dashing out of the hot, stifling darkness into a wild but never barren mountain solitude.

At last the Apennines were left behind, and we were speeding on towards Bologna, seeing miles and miles away the great monastery of San Luca, like a city in itself, on the high hill behind the town. We had but just time for a hasty drive into Bologna—which may remind English travellers of Chester, by its many colonnades; and then we went on—while the coolness of evening began to succeed the heat of the day—across the great plain of Ferrara. Glorious as are mountains, there is an odd kind of relief, which many people have confessed to feeling, in the change to a wide-spreading plain. The eye seems glad to have so far to wander; and certainly the rich and fertile plains of Ferrara are flat enough and wide enough to rest one's eyes on. Far, far away we could see the low outlines of the Euganean Hills, but all else was as level as the palm of one's hand. The hills grew a little higher as we approached; but the country at their feet, stretching away from them northward, became flatter still, if flatness can become flatter; and we began to fancy we could smell the salt air blowing in from the Great Lagoon. Above us was a great cool sky—which seems to be pitched higher in Italy than anywhere else—with the first star or two just visible, if you looked for them. There was a delicious coolness in the air—as though the wind had had a long way to blow—and the delicate greyness of the gathering twilight was full of rest.

And then the twilight began to be alive with eyes, not only up in heaven, but down on earth. The long low hedges and marsh-walls were fairly alight with glowworms. There were myriads of



CA' D'ORO PALACE ON THE GRAND CANAL.



PALACE OF THE DOGES.

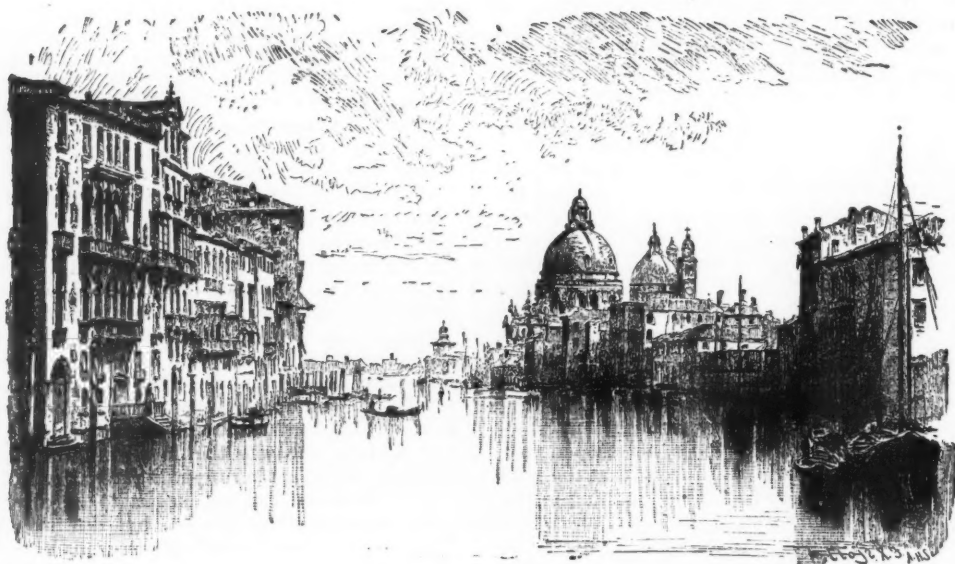
them; one could trace the banks by them as one traces a city street by the lamps. As we drew nearer and nearer to the lagoon, and the mists crept up over the plain, we could still see the glowworms twinkling everywhere. It might have been a fairy illumination.

We were so busy looking at this wonderful show of glowworms, that we had hardly noticed when the moon rose, but now, as the twilight faded more and more, and the gentle slopes of the Euganean Hills were only cloudy shadows behind

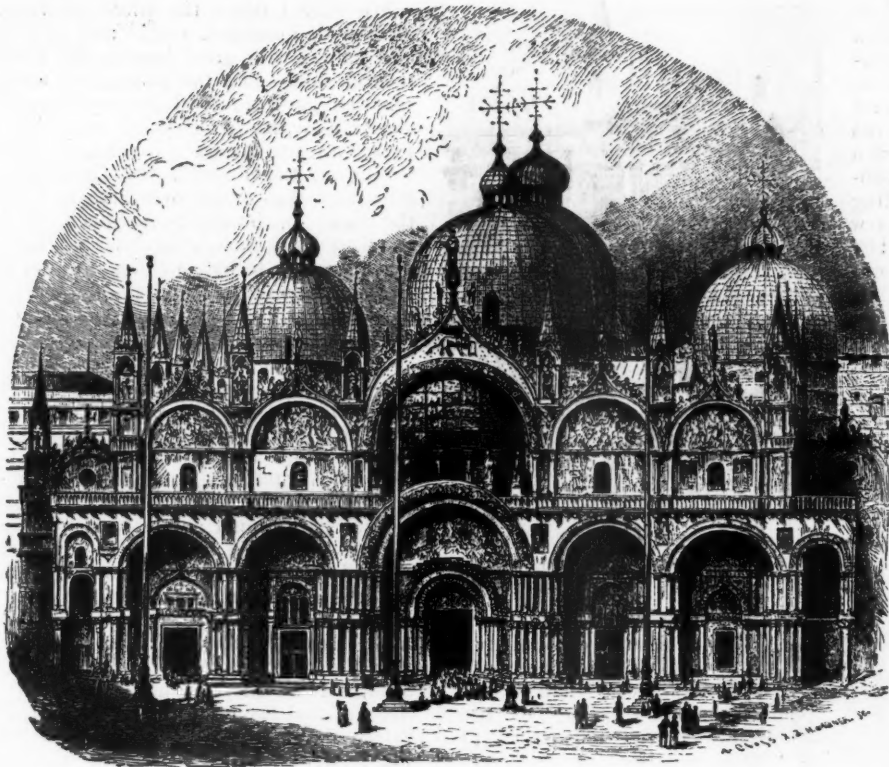
us, the moon came up out of the mists that lay along the horizon, and made a sort of silver day. We could see ahead of us the broad expanse of the lagoon, shining like molten silver, and out in the middle of it a cluster of lights, and we knew that that was VENICE—Venice, the queen and bride of the Adriatic, the city of merchant princes, the halfway house between the East and the West, the proud Republic, great in all the arts of peace and war, the bulwark of Christendom—the Turk could never conquer her, but faction destroyed her, and Spain and Austria long ground her under their remorseless heels—venerable, romantic, magnificent, mysterious Venice!

We stopped for a few moments at the last station, on the very edge of the lagoon. In the lighted darkness of the summer night, with the freshening breeze blowing in from the Adriatic, the long narrow bridge of the viaduct, which we could not see, but which we knew spanned the lagoon, and over which we must pass to Venice, gave one a strange unearthly sense of the unknown, and made one think of the Bridge of Death which spans the space between Time and Eternity.

This strange sensation of having left the world behind grew even stronger as the train left the land, and we found ourselves slowly steaming out into the lagoon. On each side of us lay the vast unrippled expanse of water, touched here and there by the moon now well risen over Venice.



THE GRAND CANAL.



SAN MARCO.

And so, on—over the waterway, until we reached the station, and gave up our tickets, and got our luggage, and, stepping into the gondola waiting to take us to our hotel, seemed to have at the same time stepped into another century.

That first half-hour in Venice can never be forgotten; but when we try to recall it, we can only see a confusion of high-towering palaces, between which the gondolier guided his gondola, uttering strange musical cries whenever he turned a corner. "*Sta-lì! Sta-lì!*" black shadows below, and above us a sky which the moon made blue at midnight. But though it was midnight, Venice was awake—who could sleep in such a night? One can sleep in Venice by day. And then, suddenly, we came out on the Grand Canal, with its stately palaces, white in the moonlight, and unfathomably black in the shadow. Gondolas gliding here and there across the broad, glittering water, and vanishing like black phantoms down some side-canal, gondolas lying moored by palace-steps—sometimes with dusky forms dimly to be perceived lying asleep in them—gondolas everywhere. We glided on as in a dream, and as in a dream we landed—somewhere—at some steps—and went in—somewhere—to an hotel, where we noted, with the feeble, unsurprised surprise of a dream, that the waiters were not in doublet and hose, but wore swallow-tailed coats, as though this were only Milan or Turin. We went to bed, but we could not sleep; it seemed to us that the

whole of the *Dramatis Personæ* of the "Merchant of Venice" were walking to and fro under our windows. We thought we heard Gratiano say, in soft Venetian speech,

"This is the pent house, under which Lorenzo desir'd us to make stand."

And Salarino answer, in a rather sleepy tone,

"His hour is almost past."

And a little later, a noise, which sounded like a very old man's, quavered out,

"Master—young gentleman—I pray you, which is the way to Master Jew's?"

Then Gratiano passed again—this time he was with Bassanio. I heard him say,

"You must not deny me; I must go with you to Belmont."

And Bassanio reply—rather bluntly,

"Why then, you must; but hear thee, thou art too wild, too rude, too bold of voice—and where thou art not known—"

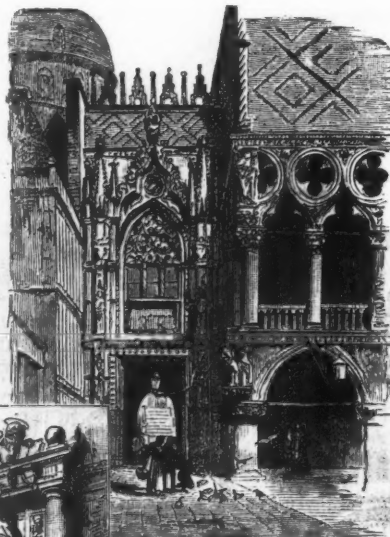
I lost the rest, as they moved on. Next, I heard a voice, which sounded like a Jew's, cry angrily,

"Tell me not of mercy—this is the fool that lent out money gratis!"

Some time after this—indeed, day had begun to



break—there was a great commotion in the street—windows thrown open, people calling to know what the matter was—and then a door hastily unlocked,



ENTRANCE INTO DOGES' PALACE.

bolts and bars undrawn; a sound of creaking hinges, and the same voice which had smacked so strong of the Hebrew Persuasion (O reporter for the daily press, I thank thee for that delicious phrase!) screamed, rather than cried, in accents of

almost inarticulate fury,

"My daughter! my ducats! A sealed bag—two sealed bags of ducats—of double ducats, stol'n from me by my daughter! And jewels—two stones—two rich and precious stones—stol'n by my daughter! Fled with a Christian? Oh, my Christian ducats! Justice! Find the girl! She hath the stones upon her—"

A burst of derisive laughter interrupted the old man, and fairly roused us up, to find that the sun was shining, and that there was a perfect Babel of voices in the back street into which one of our windows unfortunately looked.

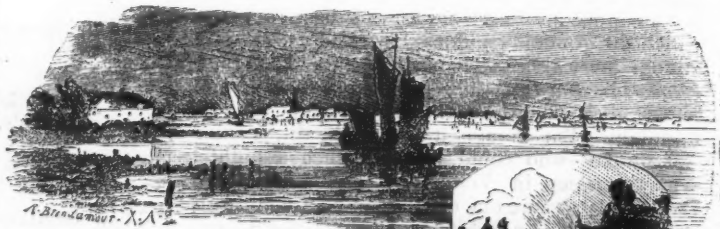
\* \* \* \* \*

The gondola was waiting for us at the steps by the church of Saint Moses. John Law, of the great South Sea Bubble, lies buried close by its western door. We got into the gondola, and a few turns brought us out into the Grand Canal—a water-street of palaces. Last night, by the beams of the full moon of May, it was wrapped in mysterious glamour; now, in the broad morning brightness, it is the reality of all poetic dreams and all painters' visions. Venice is all we ever imagined her—even, alas! to her evil smells.

We glided down the silent highway, now all alive with gondolas, single and double, private and public, with great barges and feluccas, with rustred sails—past the palaces, all asleep in the sun, their gay-coloured blinds—"Venetian blinds"—as closely drawn as eyelids over sleeping eyes. Palace after palace—the Bembo, the Grimani, the Contarini, the Foscari, the Guistiniani—as the gondolier runs glibly over each historical name, the dreams of the night come back. There is one exquisite little palace, which is said, I fear without much warrant, to have belonged to old Brabantio, Desdemona's father; and no gondolier ever fails to show his English passengers the centre one of the three Mocenigo palaces, where milor Byron lived, when he was in Venice. Then there is the beautiful Ca' d'Oro, the Golden House, for five hundred years one of the glories of Venice. But the glory is departed, the palaces are empty, or turned into hotels, the mosaics of Saint Mark have been "restored," and a speculator wants to start a steamer to ply up and down the Grand Canal.

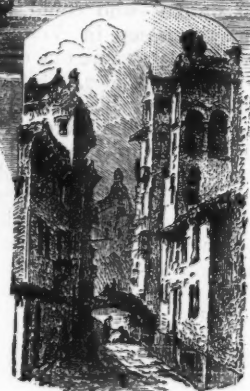
The Grand Canal comes out upon the lagoon. We have all seen it painted a hundred times—painted according to the measure of the artist's seeing—in colours warmer or colder, by the light of early morning, or noon, or sunset. Over there is the dome of Santa Maria della Salute, built after the great plague of 1631; and a little beyond, on another island, the tower of Saint George; and just opposite, the Royal Gardens, the Palace of the Doges, the columns of Saint Mark and Saint Theodorus, the great Campanile, and the topmost domes and pinnacles of the Cathedral. As we glide past the long arcades of the Ducal Palace, we look up a narrow side canal, and see spanning it the Bridge of Sighs. Beyond, the long line of the Riva de' Schiavoni stretches away to where the trees of the Public Gardens rise cool and green above the water.

Looking seaward, the low lines of the outlying islands show faintly behind a forest of masts—for



THE LAGOON.

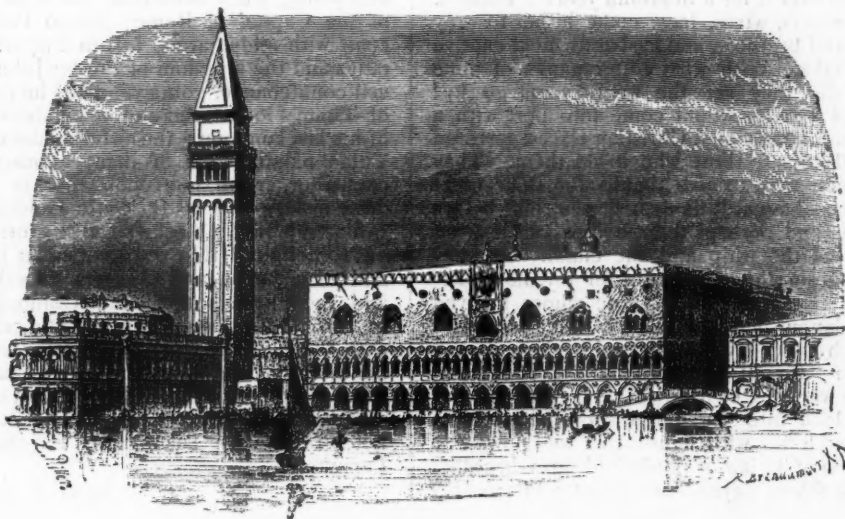
wherever one looks one sees shipping, and sailors of all nations hang about the quays. A whole fleet of gondolas lies around the steps of the Piazzetta, as we land. The Grand Piazza is a blaze of sunshine,



VENETIAN STREET

and the pigeons are strutting about in the centre of the square—every now and then one of them flutters off to perch on a coign of the Cathedral—or perhaps to sit for a moment on one

into our minds! At the first moment of entering the church seems smaller than we had expected—the next we see that it only seems so, because the dim religious light of bygone ages has settled down



CAMPANILE OF ST. MARK'S, AND PALACE OF THE DOGES.

of the four bronze horses—the only horses in Venice—above the central portal. A score or so of English sailors—most of them mere lads—with a good-natured looking officer shepherding them, come swinging out of the side-door, their honest faces full of admiring wonder. We saw their ship just now, lying at anchor opposite San Giorgio. And so we step out of the blinding glare of the Piazza into the dim and solemn coolness of the great church—we see it to-day for the first time, but we have known it all our lives.

In that dim coolness how many thoughts crowd

on its ancient columns, scarcely disturbed by a stray nineteenth century sunbeam which has come in somewhere, and for a few fleeting moments hangs about the high altar in a golden mist. Yes, the church is large enough to hold all its memories. A great silence falls on the spirit. These venerable and reverend walls have seen the changing fortunes of a thousand years. Moving in solemn procession up these solemn aisles, doges have come to invoke Heaven's blessing on the fleets of Venice, or to sing Te Deums for victory over the infidel Turk. The ancient pavement is



THE RIALTO BRIDGE AND FISH MARKET.

worn and uneven, like some wave-marked ocean-bed—but the waves which beat upon it were those of a mightier sea than ever beats on the steps of the Piazzetta—the great sea of humanity has ebbed and flowed over it for a thousand years. Fathers, mothers, sisters, wives, have come hither to pray for sons, and brothers, and husbands, held captive by the Turks. With what bitter pangs of hope deferred did they see the weary years go by! Sometimes a galley would come into port with a score or so of ransomed Christian slaves, restored beyond all hope to those who loved them. They would come here to give thanks for their great deliverance—haggard figures, grown old before their time, and perhaps their bodies still bearing the scars of the whip and the chain. As they knelt on these stones, weeping for joy, how wistfully they were watched by those whose beloved ones still languished in the land of their captivity! How much anguish was expressed in those days in the prayer “for all prisoners and captives,” and how little we think of it now!

As we look into the dimness of the past the empty church fills with figures that we know—the stately form of Titian, white-haired, grey-bearded, with quick falcon’s eyes, searching for Pietro Are-

tino; Giorgione, young and impetuous, casting impatient glances all around him; Gian Bellino, wandering slowly up and down, with gentle dreamy glances, in search of a model for his beautiful young Saint Sebastian that is in the Gallery of the Capital of Rome; Marco Polo, standing apart with folded arms, lost in a reverie of Indian cities and the kingdom of Prester John; Aretino’s evil countenance, going yellow as he catches sight of Titian’s lofty form, and remembers the subject of his last lampoon; the awful shades of the doges Titian painted, and of many another doge and councillor, crowd one upon another in the shadowy aisles—and lastly, Carlo Goldoni, with his wife beside him, a bright-faced creature; he points out to her a tall thin old gentleman in a bag-wig and a laced coat, and whispers something to her, and they both smile. But Goldoni looks too modern; what has the eighteenth century to do with Venice? It is easier to step back another hundred years and see the great church all in a blaze of splendour as the procession of the doge comes up the aisle, and hear the first triumphant notes of the *Te Deum* sung for the victory at Lepanto.

MARY A. M. HOPPUS.

### A FOOTBALL MATCH IN 1815.

ON Tuesday, the 5th of December, 1815, a great football match took place betwixt the Ettrick men and the men of Yarrow—the one party backed by the Earl of Home, and the other by Sir Walter Scott, Sheriff of the Forest, who wrote the following song for the occasion:—

#### LIFTING THE BANNER OF THE HOUSE OF BUCCLEUCH AT THE GREAT FOOTBALL MATCH ON CARTERHAUGH.

From the brown crest of Newark its summons extending,  
Our signal is waving in smoke and in flame;  
And each frester blythe from his mountain descending  
Bounds light o’er the heather to join in the game.

#### *Chorus.*

Then up with the banner, let forest winds fan her,  
She has blazed over Ettrick eight ages and more;  
In sport we’ll attend her, in battle defend her,  
With heart and with hand, like our fathers before.

When the southern invader spread waste and disorder,  
At the glance of her crescents he paused and withdrew,  
For around them were marshalled the pride of the Border,  
The flowers of the forest, the bands of Buccleuch.  
Then up with the banner, etc.

A stripling’s weak hand to our revel has borne her,  
No mail glove has grasp’d her, no spearman around;  
But ere a bold foeman should scathe or should scorn her  
A thousand true hearts would be cold on the ground.  
Then up with the banner, etc.

We forget each contention of civil dissension,  
And hail like our brethren, Home, Douglas, and Carr;  
And Elliot and Pringle in pastime shall mingle  
As welcome in peace as their fathers in war.  
Then up with the banner, etc.

Then strip, lads, and to it, though sharp be the weather,  
And if by mischance you should happen to fall,  
There are worse things in life than a tumble on heather,  
And life is itself but a game at football.  
Then up with the banner, etc.

And when it is over we’ll pledge a blythe measure  
To each laird and each lady who witnessed our fun;  
And to every blythe heart that took part in our pleasure,  
To the lads that have lost and the lads that have won.  
Then up with the banner, etc.

May the forest still flourish in borough and landward,  
From the hall of the peer to the herd’s ingle-nook;  
And huzza! my brave hearts, for Buccleuch and his stand-  
dard,  
For the king and the country, for the clan and the duke.  
Then up with the banner, etc.

Quoth the Sheriff of the Forest.

Abbotsford, Dec. 1, 1815.



## MINERS: THEIR CUSTOMS AND SUPERSTITIONS.

BY THE REV. R. THISELTON DYER, M.A., AUTHOR OF "ENGLISH FOLK LORE."

OF the many classes of toilers by land, there are none who endure more hardships than miners, or whose lives are spent under more peculiar circumstances. Indeed, when we recollect how many a miner passes the greater part of his life in the depths of the earth, constantly exposed to imminent dangers, and the entire surroundings of whose existence are altogether artificial and unnatural, it would not be surprising if he were less enlightened and educated than other classes of the working community. Yet we find many noble-hearted men amongst the miners. At any rate, it is impossible to overestimate the value of their labours, without which the welfare of the country could not be maintained, nor those industries pursued on which the comfort of our homes almost entirely depends. The risks they incur are at least as great as those incurred by sailors, perhaps even greater, and the sympathy which has been liberally bestowed upon the one form of industry should not be withheld from the other.

Referring to the peculiar notions and superstitions of the miner, it may be noted that he looks on his mine in much the same way as a sailor does his ship, being influenced in his operations by a number of odd fancies, illustrations of which we shall give in the present paper. Thus, according to a popular notion which has existed in most mining districts from time immemorial, it is frequently supposed that mines are haunted by spirits and fairies, and that they are under their special protection. This belief, indeed, may be traced up to ancient times, and is mentioned by Pliny, who speaks of spirits guarding the Scythian mines. We are told how the Arimaspians, a one-eyed people of Scythia, who adorned their hair with gold, were constantly at war with the gryphons who guarded the gold mines, an allusion to which we find in the "Paradise Lost":—

"As when a gryphon through the wilderness  
Pursues the Arimaspians, who by stealth  
Had from his wakeful custody purloined  
The guarded gold."

This belief is found also among savage tribes, and under a variety of forms appears in the traditions of most Aryan nations. What, therefore, the miner of to-day believes is an interesting survival of an early form of belief, and in all probability is a relic of that period of the world's history when wild stories were circulated of monsters who opposed man, and against which he had to make war in his struggle for mastery over the earth.

In after centuries, too, Georgius Agricola tells us how mines were supposed to contain "ghostly animals," some of which, to quote his words, "are

very terrible to behold, and they are all mostly hostile to the workmen." He further graphically adds that "there was such an animal at Anneberg, in the pits called Rosenkrantz, and that destroyed twelve men with the breath out of its mouth. He emitted the blast by opening his mouth, and was seen commonly in the shape of a horse. There was one, too, wearing a black coat in the St. George's pit of the Schneberg, and blew a man into the air, not without great danger to his body." Were we at the present day as ignorant as our forefathers, what awful stories, it has been remarked,\* might be circulated of a cruel underground dragon, which we now call by its proper name of fire-damp—that with the blast of its nostrils often destroys more than fifty men at one blow. Hence, on account of the terrible ravages which these underground demons were believed to produce, they were commonly regarded as evilly-disposed towards mortals. Reginald Scott, in his celebrated work on the "Discovery of Witchcraft"—a valuable treatise on the superstitions of bygone years—speaking of these goblins of mines, accounts for their malignity by saying that "they do exceedingly envy man's benefit in the discovery of hidden treasure, ever haunting such places where money is concealed, and diffusing malevolent and poisonous influence to blast the lives and limbs of those that dare attempt the discovery thereof. Peter of Devonshire, with his confederates, who by conjuration endeavoured to dig for such defended treasures, was crumbled to atoms, as it were, being reduced to ashes with his confederates in the twinkling of an eye." Indeed, many of our old writers allude to this superstition, upon which Fuller thus moralises: "Modern authors avouch that malignant spirits haunt the places where precious metals are found, as if the devil did there sit abroad to watch them, cunningly pretending an unwillingness to part with them; whereas, indeed, he gains more by one mine minted out into money than by a thousand concealed in the earth."

Again it appears that mines are still said to be the favourite resort of ghosts and fairies. This, indeed, is no matter of surprise, when we consider the many weird and unearthly noises to be heard in them, such as "the dripping of water down the shafts, the tunnelling of distant passages, the rumbling of trains from some freshly explored lode." The apparitions too which frequent mines are said to assume a variety of forms, one being that of a black dog. We may note here another class of Cornish apparitions known as "knockers," so named from the noise which they were in the habit of making beneath the ground.

The late Canon Kingsley, it may be remembered, has given an interesting description of these

\* See "Household Words," 1854, vol. ix. p. 96.

Cornish "knockers" in his "Yeast": "They are the ghosts, the miners hold, of the old Jews that crucified our Lord, and were sent for slaves by the Roman emperors to work the mines, and we find their old smelting-houses, which we call Jews' houses, and their blocks at the bottom of the great bogs, which we call Jews' tin; and then a town among us which we call Market Jew, but the old name was Marazion—that means the bitterness of Zion, they tell me; and bitter work it was for them, poor souls! We used to break into the old shafts and adits which they had made and find old stag's-horn pickaxes that crumbled to pieces when we brought them to grass. And they say that if a man will listen on a still night about those old shafts he may hear the ghosts of them at work, knocking and picking, as clear as if there was a man at work in the next level."

Among the numerous other stories of this kind, Mr. Henderson, in his "Folk-lore of the Northern Counties" (1879, p. 322), relates how a mine at Whitehaven was supposed to be haunted by two spectres. The story runs that the overseer of the mine—a Cumberland man—being found guilty of some unfair conduct, was dismissed by the proprietors from his post, though employed in an inferior position. The new overseer was a Northumberland man, having the burr that distinguishes that county very strongly. The two men, however, lived together in apparent friendship, until one day they were both destroyed by the fire-damp, when it was fully believed by the miners that the ex-overseer had taken his successor, less acquainted than himself with the localities of the mine, into a place where he knew fire-damp to exist without a safety lamp, and had thus contrived his destruction. At any rate, ever after, in the place where the two men perished, their voices, it was asserted, might be clearly heard in high dispute, the Northumbrian burr being distinctly audible. Similar stories are told in different parts of the Continent. In a certain mining district in Germany, a ghost was said to be seen by the miners. He was generally clad as a monk, and was of gigantic stature, always carrying in his hand a large tallow candle, which never went out. When the miners entered in the morning he would stand at the aperture with his light, letting them pass under it.\*

Again, another class of beings supposed to frequent mines are fairies, whose merry gambols and frolicsome laughter may, the miners tell us, often be heard, especially at festive seasons, such as Christmas. Occasionally, too, they have been said to assist miners in their operations, pointing out to them the directions where the best veins of ore are to be found, and how they can be best worked. A curious instance of this superstition is related by Mr. W. Smyth.† He says: "It was in the little hamlet of Llanferris, four miles southwest of Mold, that I met the villager who told me the following story. I was laying down on the Ordnance map the line of the lead-bearing lodes, which run transversely through the limestone hills

in a direction more or less east and west. Following these metalliferous veins from east to west, I had hitherto been unable to find either of them extending into the 'blue rock,' or clay slate, which lies on the west of the limestone belt. But here, near the little church, I came upon a small working in the clay slate. A villager told me that his brother, the parish clerk, had made the discovery. Late one summer evening, after a hard day's work, he was returning home across the fields, and sat down under a hedge to rest. The moon had risen, and shone out brightly. He was looking across the field, and, as he declared, not asleep, when he saw, at a short distance in front of him, a ladder raised for two or three feet above the ground, just as it is raised in an ordinary 'footway,' or ladder-shaft. Presently he perceived a little mine-fairy ascend the ladder, step by step. It was dressed like a miner. It carried a small pickaxe over its shoulder, and was supplied with other mining implements, but my informant did not mention that it had any light. When it reached the top of the ladder it got down and walked across the field to the opposite hedge, and then disappeared. The clerk, on his return home, related his strange adventure; and the most remarkable thing connected with it is that, upon the strength of his narrative, some few people about the place should have had the faith to expend their money in a mining trial on the spot where the little gnome had appeared, and should have succeeded in finding stones, which I saw, and which were indicative of the presence of the vein, although they were not promising or metalliferous enough to induce extended operations."

Again, according to a legend current among the peasantry near Largo-Law, Scotland,\* a rich mine of gold is concealed in the mountain. A fairy once appeared there, supposed to be the guardian of the mine, who, on being accosted by a neighbouring shepherd, promised to tell him, at a specified time, and on certain conditions, where "the gowd mine is in Largo-Law," especially enjoining that the horn sounded for the housing of the cows at the adjoining farm of Balmain should not blow. Every precaution having been taken, the mysterious stranger was true to his promise; but, unfortunately, when he was on the point of divulging the desired secret, Tammie Norrie, the cowherd of Balmain, blew a loud blast, whereupon the fairy instantly vanished, uttering at the same time this denunciation:—

"Woe to the man that blew the horn,  
For out of the spot he shall ne'er be borne."

The unlucky horn-blower was struck dead, and as it was found impossible to remove the body, a cairn of stones was raised over it. The mischievous frolics indulged in by the fairies at the expense of the poor miner are certainly curious, a specimen of which we quote as recorded among the folk-tales of Germany.† One day, as a miner was working in a shaft, there approached him a little man clad in white, with a light in his hand, who

\* Thorpe's "Northern Mythology," iii. 96.

† Quoted in Bishop Thirlwall's "Letters to a Friend," 1882, pp. 262, 270.

\* Jones's "Credulities Past and Present," pp. 133-4.

† Thorpe's "Northern Mythology," iii. 96.

beckoned to him to follow him. He did so, and soon reached a spacious hall, where a large assemblage of persons were eating and drinking. A cup of wine was quickly handed to him, and after he had been liberally regaled, the little man gave him a gold pin, telling him that if any one should take it from him, he had only to let him know, and he would secure it for him again. When the miner, however, returned home, all appeared strange to him; he knew no one that he met, and no one knew him. He then went to the clergyman, who, on looking through the church book, found that he had been three ages of man down in the bowels of the earth with the fairies, though to him it seemed but a few hours. But the chief officer of the mines, when he heard the man's narrative, was seized with a longing for the gold pin, which, on the miner refusing to part with it, he took by force. The miner thereupon returned to the mine and made his complaint to the little white man, who quickly put the officer to death, and restored to him his pin, by the possession of which he became wealthy for the rest of his days. Referring to the fairy festivities in mines at certain seasons of the year, it was in former years popularly believed amongst the miners in Cornwall, that on Christmas Eve the "small people," or "the Spiggans," would assemble together at the bottom of the deepest mines and have a midnight mass. Many a miner on this night of the year has walked some miles for the purpose of hearing the fairy music swell from beneath the earth.

Among the numerous superstitions which enter into the miner's daily life, may be noticed his dislike to hearing whistling underground, a rule which, we are informed, is rarely infringed by even the youngest boy. Great faith is attached by the miner to the horseshoe, which he not only regards as a preservative against witchcraft, but as a safeguard against evil influences. It is considered, too, the height of ill-luck for a miner to meet a woman either on his way to work in the morning, or on leaving the pit-mouth; and should he on his return home at night meet a stranger, and receive no answer from him in return to his customary greeting, "Good night!" it is considered an omen of misfortune.

Indeed, like sailors, miners firmly believe in warnings, and assert that colliery explosions are generally preceded by a foreboding of some kind. Thus, among the colliers of Leicestershire are the "Seven Whistlers," birds sent purposely, as they affirm, by Providence to prepare them for a coming danger. A correspondent of "Notes and Queries" states that during a thunderstorm in the neighbourhood of Kettering on the evening of September 6, 1871, an unusual spectacle was witnessed, for immense flocks of birds were flying about uttering a doleful shrill whistling, which they kept up for some hours. "The following day," adds the writer, "as my servant was driving me to a neighbouring village, this phenomenon of the flight of birds became the subject of conversation, and on asking him what birds he thought they were, he informed me they were what were called the 'Seven Whistlers,' and that whenever they were heard it was considered a sign of some

great calamity, and that the last time he heard them was before the great Hartley Colliery explosion. He had also been told by soldiers that if they heard them they always expected a great slaughter would soon take place. Curiously enough, on taking up the newspaper the following morning I saw headed in large letters, 'Terrible Colliery Explosion at Wigan.' " Wordsworth, in one of his sonnets, couples the "Seven Whistlers" with the "Gabriel hounds"—those mysterious spectre dogs which, as they sweep through the midnight air, are supposed to foretell impending misfortune—

"The poor old man is greater than he seems;  
He the seven birds hath seen that never part,  
Seen the Seven Whistlers in their nightly rounds,  
And counted them; and oftentimes will start,  
For overhead are sweeping Gabriel's hounds."

Once more, in the "Times" of September 21, 1874, another interesting instance of this superstition occurs, where it is related how a large number of the men employed at some of the Bedworth Collieries, in North Warwickshire, refused to descend the coal-pits in which they were employed, affirming that the "Seven Whistlers" had been distinctly heard in the neighbourhood of Bedworth.

Miners have their special days in the calendar. Many of these are connected with their work. In Cornwall, the second Monday before Christmas Day is a festival kept by the tinnerns, and known as "Picrous Day" in the neighbourhood of Blackmore. It is not at present marked by any distinctive ceremonies, but it is the occasion of a merry-making, and the owner of the tin mine contributes a shilling a man towards it.

Hitchens, in his "History of Cornwall" (1824, vol. i. p. 725), says that it was at one time also customary in this county on the last Thursday that was one clear week before Christmas Day—popularly termed, "White Thursday,"—for the tinnerns to claim a holiday, owing to a tradition that on this day black tin or ore was first melted or turned into white tin in this part of the country. The same authority also informs us that the 5th of March has been observed by the tinnerns of Cornwall as a holiday, which they call St. Piran's Day, because this saint is reported, in days gone by, to have communicated some important information relative to the tin manufacture. The three days in the year most rigidly kept by miners are Christmas Day, Good Friday, and Holy Innocents' Day; it being with them a popular notion that to enter a mine on one of these days would be followed by some misfortune.

The first Friday in March, popularly known as "Friday in Lide," so called from *Lide*, Anglo-Saxon for March, has been observed among the tinnerns in Cornwall by a serio-comic custom of sending a young man to the highest mound or hillock of the work, and allowing him to sleep there as long as he can, the length of his *siesta* being the measure of the afternoon nap for the tinnerns throughout the ensuing twelve months. In Saxon times midday sleep was common.



A Midnight Watch



WATCHING.

in Germany.



NAPPING.

## A MECKLENBURG RECTORY:

A GLIMPSE OF DOMESTIC LIFE IN GERMANY.

"**M**ECKLENBURG! what tempts you to go to Mecklenburg? It is the ugliest part of Germany; neither hills nor anything else worth seeing!"

Although rather damped by this speech, coming from one who knew Germany, there were good reasons why we should not draw back from our purpose, and certainly had we done so we should have deprived ourselves of much pleasure. In setting down these recollections of our sojourn abroad we have nothing to say of "hills" or of towns, but write only of domestic matters that may be interesting to English homes.

A twelve milés' drive from the town of Rostock, partly through great woods and over rough roads, brought us to our destination. The carriage drove through a courtyard in front of the house, which was built in the form of a low, wide cottage, with great cellars underneath, and steps leading to the front door, which was shaded on each side by beautiful lime-trees. The lady and her daughters had come out to meet us, which is the custom there, with the kindest of welcomes, and led us through a large square lobby, in which were several wardrobes, upstairs. We have almost now forgotten the impression that the absence of stair and hall carpets made upon us, for on reaching our room our attention was pleasantly arrested by the large printed texts of Scripture above beds and chests of drawers, as also by the numerous bouquets of flowers. The house was most commodious: three sitting-rooms, one opening off the other, and glass doors from the dining-room into the garden. The daughters had a sitting-room upstairs. The pastor, of course, had his own library.

Here, as elsewhere abroad, every one rose early. The master of the house got up at four in summer and five in winter; of course the servants rose, or, rather, were rung up, then also. Coffee was ready at six, second breakfast at nine, dinner at half-past twelve, coffee at four, supper at eight, which, during some months in summer, consisted of large, flat basins of thickened milk, that is to say, milk which had stood for at least two days in a cellar and was allowed to get sour. Grated black bread and sugar were sprinkled upon each plate, and we soon liked it as much as the Mecklenburg people do. But we must not forget to mention one meal, the name of which was new to us—"vesper bread." It was taken by many families about six, the time when in Catholic days they used to go to vespers. Another usage belonging to the same period is bells ringing for prayer, as they do in the country parts of Mecklenburg at twelve minutes past six and eight in summer, and in winter at twelve minutes past eight and four. Many people stop whatever work engages them till they cease.

Three young ladies seemed to be visiting the

family, but after a day or two we noticed that two of them seldom were in the room; and at coffee, morning and afternoon, they waited on every one, poured out coffee at a side table, and cut bread. Also at dinner and supper they always rose to fetch anything that was wanting, changed plates, etc., and the daughters of the house had no hesitation in asking them to bring them anything they wished. We could not understand it, till at length one of the daughters told us that two of them had come to learn housekeeping for a year, and that the third had also learnt housekeeping with them and was now on a visit.

The only leisure the two, former had was on Sunday afternoon. Although highly educated they did everything that was necessary in the house. There were three servants, but these were so much occupied with the cattle outside generally, that very little dependence could be placed on their assistance beyond paring potatoes (not always), washing, and going round the bedrooms for half an hour. When on this most interesting question it may not be uninteresting to our English readers to know the amount of their wages. Four or five pounds a year was the fee of a most efficient woman; but at Christmas they got a dress, and in October some yards of linen sheeting, homespun, or they got a corner of a field in which flax was planted, which they afterwards sold.

We found it was a very common thing for girls, after they had finished their education, to go for a year to learn everything necessary, and it is generally to a manse they go. They do the cooking, bake bread, set tables, wash dishes, iron, work in the garden, and pay a board to be allowed to do so; and the lady who has such assistants is much more to be envied than is many an English lady who has a house filled with experienced servants.

The extreme conscientiousness and anxiety on the part of these young ladies that everything should be right, struck us exceedingly, and their duties were no light matter in a house filled with a succession of visitors the whole summer. They were often downstairs at four o'clock, baking bread and hot rolls for breakfast; and we sometimes met them rushing upstairs five minutes before dinner, with faces crimson from standing over the kitchen fire, to change their dresses. Each young lady came accompanied by her feather-beds, sheets, chest of drawers, kitchen aprons, as well as white dress aprons, the latter being no small addition to the washings, but, as they ironed themselves, they were entitled to the luxury.

We shall never forget the beauty of the gardens and the great abundance of fruit. The common complaint of the owners was what could be done with it? for it scarcely paid the carriage to take it to Rostock. Four hundred pounds of splendid



cherries were one day sent into town and sold for £1 9s.

The German ladies, in consequence of the great abundance of fruit and the dearness of sugar, use very little of the latter in making preserves, and to make them keep they pour boiling fat on the top of the jars to exclude air.

An important matter in a German household is the birthdays. Nothing seems to give more pleasure than celebrating one. The birthday of one of the housekeeping young ladies was in June. The night before a box came addressed to the lady of the house, from her home. Upon going downstairs at seven next morning we were surprised to see no appearance of coffee, so, opening the glass doors, went into the garden, where a gay scene presented itself. A large arbour was hung with garlands and white curtains, and in the centre was a table covered with white, on which were spread the presents, and a huge round cake occupied the place of honour, surrounded by a wreath of flowers; and in the middle a lighted candle was burning. Outside were two smaller tables, with coffee, cakes, etc., standing round which was a large party talking and laughing. Upon seeing us approach they came forward to wish us good morning, and to enjoy our looks of surprise. The birthday child (a substantial maiden of twenty-one) advanced blushing, with a wreath of flowers on her head. The young ladies of the house had been up early decorating the arbour, and making things as homelike as possible for her on her birthday. The winter birthdays were equally interesting. That of the lady of the house was then, and the sitting-room was adorned with branches of trees from the woods, and wreaths surrounded the tables laid out with presents. One table was devoted to useful articles, such as pots, pans, etc., and these also were surrounded by garlands! At four company began to arrive, but with no invitation, although preparations in the way of coffee and supper had been made for above twenty, and it is a great disappointment if friends fail to appear.

One evening, when at supper, a messenger came in, saying the cheeses had arrived from —. We found that from this family they received every year sixty sheep's cheeses, eggs, etc., being their contribution to the minister's salary. The cheeses were excellent, weighing about a pound each.

The marriage of the eldest son took place during our stay. He had studied for the church; but the candidates for this work, instead of hanging on till they get churches, are appointed to schools, where they often remain for several years. For two or three weeks before the event there were numerous rehearsals of a little play, which had been composed by a daughter of the house to be acted the evening before the wedding. Of course bride and bridegroom were present, but took no part. Dresses, spectacles, and other things, were borrowed from old women in the village, and some of the girls' costumes were most picturesque. But we were almost glad, after the many preparations, to see the whole family drive off in different conveyances, with boxes enough to contain the entire possessions of many a family.

One of the principal events in a Mecklenburg household, is the great autumn washing. Many families only wash three or four times a year. A lady whom we visited one day took us, at our own request, to the scene of operations. Eight women were bending over washtubs. The lady of the house was seldom absent, moving among them, superintending everything, and often hearing all that was going on in the neighbourhood. Each woman receives ninepence a day! One may imagine the enormous stores of drapery which are required to carry out such arrangements. A lady when she marries gets about two hundred table napkins, and everything else in proportion. In most country houses there are great accumulations of unmade linen patiently waiting the first marriage in the family. It is the custom generally for the wives to furnish the house, supplying silver, everything, in short.

One excursion we made was to the old Hanseatic town of Rostock. The village conveyance, a long cart with sacks across, was at the door at six o'clock on a lovely July morning, and in three hours we drove through one of the gates into the city, the church towers of which had been visible for long, the steeple of St. Peter's being one of the highest in Europe. Rostock has fourteen gates, seven to the sea and seven to the country, and they have often been of great use, as Rostock, or rather Mecklenburg, suffered dreadfully at different periods from incursions by the Danes, etc., and also during the Seven Years' War, and in Napoleon's time. For long it has traded with England, Norway, and Riga. Rostock is a fine town, boasting of a University, opposite which is a statue of Blücher on horseback, who was a native of this town. At the Reformation the town of Rostock threw off popery, and the Lutheran form of worship was introduced into the four churches within eight days through the preaching and exertions of Slüter, who is called the Rostock Reformer. After walking over the ramparts we went in the little steamer (very similar to those on the English lakes) to Warnemünde, a bathing-place, also on the Baltic, a favourite resort, not only of the Mecklenburg people, but also of families from Berlin, Hamburg, and other cities. Facing the sea is a long row of cottages, which are shaded by a row of fine trees. They have neither gardens nor the smallest tuft of grass to separate them from the road. The sitting-rooms are in front, and are just on the ground, composed almost entirely of glass, which is removed in winter when the owners live behind. Certainly one sees German home-life there. In some rooms parties were sitting at coffee, writing, reading, or working; others were seated outside occupied in the same way, and they were really quite as retired seated on the public road as inside. On the shore we several times saw a lady seated in a luxurious easy-chair with her work-table at her side. Indeed one could not imagine anything more unlike our English and Scotch watering-places, and we felt strangely attracted to it. Our drive home by moonlight was not the least enjoyable part of the very happy day.

In church the women sit upon one side and the

men upon the other. On their way to their pews they nod to their friends, even during the singing. Seldom two Sabbaths pass without a great many people partaking of the Sacrament, often more than a hundred. The women never wear bonnets, and the caps of the elderly women are very varied and very gay. Their dresses are always black. The clergymen have very little liberty in their choice of texts. They are expected to preach on the passages at the end of the hymn-book arranged for the different parts of the church year, and we scarcely remember one being taken from the Old Testament; so, were it not that the Bible, or religion as they call it, is taught daily in the schools, the people would be much more ignorant than they are.

When an engagement takes place among any of the people, it is announced from the pulpit, so breaches of promise of marriage are very unusual. The weddings are mostly celebrated in the clergyman's house, the bridal party arriving in a long cart drawn by two horses, and the bride arrayed in a sort of tartan plaid, with a wreath and a long white tulle veil upon her head. The service at funerals is always in church, and largely attended by women.

"It is time I was going in to Rostock to see about my Christmas presents," was the remark addressed to us by one of the girls who was learning housekeeping. "Christmas presents! eleven weeks before Christmas!" was the answer. "Yes indeed, it is the best time." And she actually set off next day to her home, and returned in a few days loaded principally with materials for work, nearly penniless, but supremely happy nevertheless. "Now my mind is at rest; I think I have remembered everything, and shall not require to return again before the Feast." This word sounded strange to our Scotch ears, not having been accustomed to look upon it as a church festival or holiday.

But we soon began to see how important a place it occupied in Germany. Everything that was done had some reference to it. A daughter of the house was from home, and when any one asked when she would return the answer always was, "In the first Advent week." The 25th November was a fast day, a day of preparation for Christmas. The church was very full, and a full church in Germany means more than in Britain, children being rarely to be seen, as in summer they often have afternoon service for themselves. The Confirmation classes begin at this time, and are in the pastor's house, meeting twice a week between the hours of nine and eleven. Of course the children must absent themselves from school or work on these days.

One of the most important events in a Mecklenburg manse, in winter, is the killing of a pig or pigs. For some days the making of sausages, etc., was occupation enough for any number of people. One evening we went into the milk-room, which was brilliantly lighted and heated, and found the lady of the house, her three daughters, two young ladies, the housekeeper, and two servants, all attired in large white aprons, engaged in making sausages and humming snatches of

songs. It was really a pretty sight. The great Christmas bakery comes next, principally consisting of ginger-nuts, almond biscuits, as well as biscuits in the form of dogs, hunters, arrows, etc., with which the Christmas trees are adorned. The spices are all pounded at home, and the almonds grated, so when one hears that it is not only for the use of the family, but that some are sent in all the Christmas boxes which go to friends, one may imagine that for some days no one is idle. When all this is done the large basins of dough are placed on a barrow, covered with clean white towels, and a man-servant drives it to the mill, followed by the lady of the house and her daughters, wrapped in shawls, with clean white aprons, and a relay of clean towels over their arms. The firing of them in the mill occupies about six hours.

Along with all these household preparations the making of Christmas presents is steadily proceeding. Parties of two or three shut themselves up in a sitting-room (and it is well a German rectory is well supplied with rooms); and one must at this season wait some time after knocking before permission is given to enter, as it may chance to be your Christmas present at which they are working. The very children make as many gifts, and quite as prettily, as their seniors.

Everything is made that can be used. When we see the piles of work accumulating we begin to think it is about over, but the most serious business is yet to come, and that is always done after ten at night—the packing of the boxes to be sent away; and no little ingenuity is required, first to find the size of box for every one, and then safely and economically to pack slippers, pictures, white tulle caps, sausages, and pepper-nuts, so that they may not come to grief before they reach their journey's end. But the last box is at length off, and all energies can now be concentrated on home preparations. By this time boxes are beginning to arrive, which are privately opened by the lady of the house.

On Christmas Eve the presents are given. The mother and daughter are shut up all day in the best room, only occasionally emerging. As the day advances the excitement of the family and servants increases. At six all go up to dress, and at seven the family, servants, outdoor and indoor, men and women, collect in silence in the room next the mysterious apartment. The pastor walks in and takes a seat, his wife meanwhile seating herself at the piano, and a Christmas hymn is sung by all. When this is finished the folding-doors are opened, and the pastor and his wife, followed by all the company, walk into the best room, which has the appearance of a bazaar, except that upon the centre table stands the Christmas tree, brilliantly lighted and adorned with chains of coloured glass, the biscuits in the shapes of animals, and many other things. In one corner, on a small table, is a lovely transparent picture of the manger at Bethlehem, lighted from behind, and ornamented with green twigs.

Each member of the family had a table except the father and mother, the servants' table being in the corner, upon which lay dresses,

collars, cuffs, etc. The tables were most beautifully decorated. They rose towards the back, and had candles burning upon them, and all the pretty laces, of which there were not a few, were laid upon red, blue, and green paper. One may say that everything was included in the Christmas presents. Upon the table of the two youngest girls were new dresses, which had been made privately for them, and also new hats. The engaged daughter received a beautiful copy of Carl Jerok's "From Bethlehem to Golgotha," illustrated by Flockhorst, from her future mother-in-law; but, as if afraid that the practical might be overlooked in this gift, it was accompanied by a large blue cooking apron, with a worked border. The combined gifts were rather amusing, and most characteristic of the German nation.

After spending some time surveying our new possessions as well as those of our friends, thanking and being thanked, we returned to the room we had left, where, during our absence, the sons had placed their father's and mother's tables, between which was a smaller Christmas tree, beautifully ornamented. On these, as well as on all the other Christmas tables, were plates of biscuits, chocolate wrapped in bright-coloured papers, etc. The lady's presents were, of course, the most numerous and most interesting, among which was a dress spun by a young lady who had learned housekeeping with her. But the husband's present to his wife must not be forgotten: a pretty little basin to wash teacups in, and three smooth white boards to cut meat upon! After having sufficiently admired these things we moved into the adjoining room, and took our places round the lamp-lit table, to partake of that most social German meal—a tea-supper (if one is not too particular about the quality of the tea); and a very happy company we were. Perhaps the happiness of the engaged daughter might have been

greater had her friend been by her side, but the engagement not having been announced in the newspapers or in church, the father thought it premature to have him during Christmas visiting.

Next day (Sabbath) all went to church, which was crowded, and the family were invited to spend the evening with friends; but as the pastor had service in another part of the parish, and required the horses, the invitation was refused. Monday there was again service in the church, and friends came to spend the evening and admire the presents which had not yet been put away. On New Year's Eve we all remained up till twelve, when "Das alte Jahr verzanger ist" was sung.

We found the German ladies much more demonstrative than English, and especially Scotch, ladies are. The mother and sisters of the lady of the house seldom address their sisters or each other without some endearing epithet, and they seemed always to be going about arm in arm. The sons of the house, however, never went beyond kissing the hands of their grandmothers and aunts night and morning.

The people of Mecklenburg are celebrated for their hospitality, which makes the pleasantest impression upon strangers. In olden times, in many parts of Mecklenburg as well as in Stettin, there was always a room with a table spread for any guests who might arrive unexpectedly, and it is said they did not think much of stealing to enable them to exercise the rights of hospitality.

Here, as in most other Continental countries, strangers call first on the residents. A year's residence in Mecklenburg unfortunately did not cause us to leave with the feeling that all that was English was perfection, for the absence of drunkenness and great poverty made us often sigh when we thought of the scenes which are to be met with in our great and wealthy cities.

## A PERILOUS RIDE.

### AN AUSTRALIAN STORY

#### I.

SOME few years ago I was the manager of a branch of the Australian Joint Stock Bank, situated in a little up-country bush town in the northern part of New South Wales. I had been transferred to this branch from another branch at a place called P—, about one hundred miles away. P— was surrounded, like other bush towns, by large sheep and cattle stations, and whenever we could get a day or two away from business, we always rode off to one or another of them, to have a day's sport, either shooting wild duck, running down kangaroos, or perhaps wild horses. One of these stations ("Southampton Downs" we will call it) soon became more at-

tractive to me than the others, and my frequent visits ended at last in my marriage with the eldest of the three daughters of Mr. S—, the owner. Shortly afterwards I was transferred to W—, and there we had remained until about a fortnight before my tale commences, when my father-in-law had come down and taken my wife and baby home with him in his buggy to Southampton Downs to spend Christmas. Christmas Day in that year fell on a Friday, and I had arranged to leave on the Wednesday before, directly the bank closed, and so be in time at the station for Christmas Eve, which was always held in high festival.

The staff of an up-country branch such as was



mine, consists generally of a manager, or acting manager, and at the most two clerks or accountants. The cash is kept of course in an iron safe, to which there are two distinct locks, the key of one being held by the manager and the other by an accountant, so that both must be present when the safe is opened. I at this time had only one accountant, his name was Upton, and he had come up to the branch about three weeks before, my former clerk having gone to Queensland. I had often heard of him by name, and had somehow pictured him as about three or four and twenty, so I was rather surprised when a middle-aged man of at least forty arrived and presented me with the general manager's letter. And afterwards he did not prove the most genial companion in the world, for he would rarely speak unless first spoken to, and amused himself chiefly by taking long walks in the bush after banking hours. But he was steady enough in his habits, which after all was the principal thing to be looked at.

The fortnight that passed after my wife left seemed the longest of my life. And it would have seemed longer still but that its dull monotony was broken by one or two unusual incidents. One of them was an attempt to enter my bedroom at night. I was roused by the noise made in forcing the French windows, and jumped out of bed only in time to see a figure disappearing off the verandah upon which they opened. Some half-tipsy roysterer just turned out of the neighbouring public-house, I thought, and went back to bed. And the other was a man who kept on coming into the bank with a valueless cheque, which he persisted in presenting for payment, and whom in the end we had to forcibly eject. In the colonies an attempt has sometimes been made to "stick up" a bank, as it is called. One or more armed men rush in, and, with their revolvers at the heads of the clerks, compel them to hand over the cash. So we always view with suspicion any endeavour to create a disturbance in the bank, and always keep a couple of loaded revolvers handy under the counter. It was just as well that this was not an attempt of the kind, for, chancing to look at my revolvers, I found them unloaded. I was very much surprised at this, because it was a thing about which I was most particular; but, having lately cleaned them, I had forgotten, I supposed, to replace the cartridges.

At length the Wednesday came upon which I was to leave to rejoin my wife. My preparations had all been made long before—my horse "Red Lancer," brought in from the paddock and corn-fed, my valise all ready packed to strap on my saddle, and I was clanking about the bank, booted and breeched and spurred, in a state of feverish impatience. What, then, was my disgust to see the telegraph clerk come in just before closing time with a telegram, which on opening I found to be in the bank cypher. It was from Mr. Harper, one of our inspectors, and upon applying the key it was worded thus: "*Meet me Thuringowa, Thursday. Bring seven thousand eight hundred notes to complete purchase Glengarry. Important. Do not fail.*"

My disgust at the receipt of this telegram up-

setting all my plans may be easily imagined. Yet I was not altogether surprised at it, for I knew that Mr. Harper was in the upper part of the Gwydir district, and that there was some competition between our bank and another for the purchase of the large sheep station "Glengarry," which had been thrown into the market by the sudden death of its owner, and its compulsory division among his heirs. And I knew, too, that in the event of our bank becoming the purchaser the money would have to be forthcoming at an early date, in consequence of there being so many separate claims, and that as the nearest branch would be unable to furnish the required sum, mine would be sure to have to come to its aid. But still I was rather surprised at the large amount required of me, for it would leave—a most unusual thing—a comparatively very small balance with which to continue the business of the branch. But probably, I thought, Mr. Harper has taken the fact of the coming holidays into account, and has made arrangements for remittances to be forwarded from Sydney, to arrive before we reopen the bank on the following Wednesday.

Thuringowa, where I was to meet Mr. Harper with the notes, was little more than a stopping-place for Cobb's coaches. It was called a township, but, like a good many more in the bush, consisted only of a roadside public-house, a blacksmith's shop, a small chapel, a telegraph station, a government school, and, dotted round here and there, a few "humpies" as they are called, the rough slab or bark huts of the free selector, or "cockatoo squatter." It was on the main road from the interior to where the railway to Sydney commenced, and the up and down coaches stopped here three times a week to change horses and give their passengers half an hour for dinner. From W—— it was about forty miles distant, and seventy miles farther on was Southampton Downs, so I calculated that Mr. Harper, coming down by coach to save time, would receive the money from me, return at once, and leave me free to go on to my father-in-law's without more delay. And though I should be too late for the fun and merry-making on Christmas Eve, I should still be in time, by pushing on, to eat my Christmas dinner at the station.

Between Thuringowa and Southampton Downs there was no road properly so called, but merely an obscure bridle-track over a range of mountains that divided them, and there were no houses or settlers of any kind until you crossed this range and got down into the plains the other side. Any one starting, therefore, as late in the day as I should would have to camp out on the mountains for the night, and go on at sunrise. I had no objection to this, being too much of a bushman to prefer the wretched accommodation of a wayside inn to the free air of heaven, but it involved my taking another horse, both to divide my weight during the longer journey, as well as to carry the blankets, tea, sugar, and other things, which my new arrangements demanded. So I got in from the paddock my wife's pet mare, "Lady Jane," and made all ready for an early start in the morning.

Soon after sunrise then saw me on the road riding "Red Lancer," and leading the mare, upon whose back was strapped my valise, sheet of macintosh, blankets, and commissariat. The notes for greater security I had placed in my waist-pouch, an ordinary one such as every bushman wears, and which serves to carry his tobacco or money or what not in a country where one rarely wears a coat and waistcoat, except when with ladies of an evening. I rode on steadily, and arrived at Thuringowa soon after noon, and before the down coach was due I unsaddled my horses, and saw them each set to work at a good feed of Indian corn, while my saddles and their belongings I carried inside the inn. After depositing them safely in one of the little bedrooms, I went down to a neighbouring waterhole to enjoy a "bogey"—as a bathe and swim is called—and get rid of some of the dust and heat of the road. For Christmas time in Australia is little like the old traditional Christmas of England. To begin with, it is at the very hottest time of the year, in the height of an Australian summer instead of the depth of an English winter. In the place of leafless trees and dull, cold sky, and perchance a broad expanse of snow, you have a bright blue, cloudless sky, endless forests of evergreen trees that never shed their leaves at all, and a fierce sun that beats pitilessly down from sunrise to sunset. You are scorched, in fact, instead of frozen, and the luxury of a plunge into some cool, tree-shaden pool is a thing not to be forgotten. So I splashed about to my heart's content, and presently dressed and returned to the inn just in time to see the coach and its five horses dash up with much noise and clatter. As soon as the cloud of dust that surrounded it allowed me, I looked for Mr. Harper, but he was not there, either inside or out, and upon asking "George," the driver, where he had left him, "Left him!" said he: "why, he went right through to Sydney—last Tuesday week, I think it was," and then, getting down, in went George with the rest of the passengers, to make the most of the time allowed for dinner.

Not a little staggered by this information, I found out the landlord and asked him whether Mr. Harper had left any message or letter for me on his way down. "No," said he, "he left nothing." "Didn't he say anything about expecting to meet me here?" "No, he never said a word about meeting nobody, leastways to me." And this was all the information I could glean in that quarter.

When the driver came out, I questioned him as to how the sale of Glengarry had gone, but he knew nothing except that one of the nephews had travelled down the coach before on his way to England by the Suez mail, and that Mr. Harper had never alluded to meeting any one at Thuringowa, and "didn't expect to," he should say; then, mounting the box, he took the reins, and to his cry of "All aboard!" quickly saw the passengers in their places, and away whirled the coach in a cloud of dust.

As soon as it was gone I walked up and down the verandah, and tried to arrive at some conclusion as to what I had heard in the past half-hour.

The fact of one of the family having left for England looked as if all matters connected with the division and sale of the property had been concluded. I had stupidly in my impatience forgotten to notice the date of the despatch of the telegram, and I had not brought it with me. Could it have been delayed in the transmission, and ought I to have received it some days before? I resolved at all events to telegraph to Sydney at once, and then I might expect an answer in a few hours, which perhaps would put everything right. So I went over to the office, and soon sent off the following: "To the General Manager, A. J. S. Bank, Sydney. *Have arrived here with required amount. Harper gone down. Await further instructions.*"

Upon my return to the inn I ordered such dinner as they could give me, thinking it about the best way to wile away the time. Presently I went to get some little thing out of my traps, and I noticed they had been moved somewhat from the position in which I had left them, but as the contents were all safe and right I thought no more of it. I made my lonely dinner spin out as long as I could, for there were no books to read, and not a soul to talk to. There were but a few men in and about the bar and the verandah outside—half a dozen, perhaps, at the most—drinking, and smoking, and talking; and of these, two or three, I could see by their rolled blankets and billies, were either "swagsmen" in search of a job at some of the surrounding stations, or else shearers coming down country and spending their cheques on the way. After dinner I went outside with a chair, and my pipe, and an old copy of the "Queenslander" I had chanced upon, and so got through the afternoon tolerably well, until at last about five o'clock I saw the telegraph clerk coming across with a message in his hand. I opened it, and found it was from Mr. Harper himself, and ran thus:

*"Yours received, greatly surprised, never sent for you, some conspiracy, be on your guard, acquaint police."*

## II.

I READ this startling telegram twice through before it dawned upon me that I was the tool of a villainous scheme to rob the bank. Immediately several little suspicious circumstances which I have not mentioned here flashed across my mind. This too explained the disturbance of my valise during my absence from the inn, the large amount of money directed to be brought so as to make a prize worth having, and the ingenious way in which the actual negotiations then in process by the bank had been turned to account. This and the employment of the cypher made it pretty certain that the authors of the plot were themselves in the actual service of the bank, and I was, I saw, the victim of a well-laid plan throughout.

While these thoughts were running through my head I still pretended to be absorbed in the newspaper which I had been reading before the advent of the telegraph clerk. For I *felt* eyes watching me, and I wanted to make up my plan of action, without if possible letting them know that

I had any cause for alarm. If I could make believe that I was as yet innocent of the whole plot it would most likely prove to be something gained. So I carelessly strolled along to the bar door and said to the landlord in an ordinary tone of voice, but yet loud enough to reach any listening ears, "They don't know anything about Mr. Harper in Sydney, landlord; are you quite sure he said nothing about coming back here to-night?"

"I am quite sure," said the landlord, "that he didn't say anything to me about coming back, but of course he might be coming back for all that."

"I think he must be," said I; "he sent me a message to meet him here to-day upon very particular business, and if he wasn't able to come he'd surely let me know."

"I should think so too," says the landlord, "for he's a very particular man is Mr. Harper."

"I suppose I must wait then," said I, "that's all;" and with this I walked off round to the stables to give an eye to the horses. They were all right, and I saw to their having another feed of corn, for a great deal, nothing less indeed than my life, might depend upon them that night.

Going back to the verandah I resumed my seat and my newspaper, while I made up my mind what was the best course for me to pursue. That an attack upon me would be made was certain. How many of the men that were hanging about the place were implicated in the affair it was impossible for me to judge, for they all seemed very familiar and intimate with one another; but however many there might be they must know that I had the money about me, and failing to obtain it by stratagem, they would soon have recourse to force. Whether I remained at the hotel, or whether I started off on the road, would not make much difference as far as this was concerned, nor would the choice of roads matter much. The road back to Windsor was nearly as far and quite as lonely as the road on to Southampton Downs, and on both, if overtaken, should I be at their mercy. Nor if I remained at the hotel should I be any better off. The landlord was a stranger to me, and as it happened a new-comer, and for all I knew might be implicated himself, while, if not, a weatherboard bush hotel, built as usual without shutters and with doors half of glass, would be the last place in which to stand a siege. There were no police in the township whose protection I could seek, and none within such distance that I could by telegraphing secure their aid in time. The few settlers about were very probably cattle stealers or otherwise of indifferent morals, and if they had any idea that there was so much money about, what they would most likely do would be to try and get some of it for themselves. I was in an awkward fix which ever way I looked at it.

Unfortunately, too, I was practically unarmed. For, unwilling to be encumbered with a heavy revolver—which, slung around my waist, would have itself only served to attract attention—I, unsuspecting of danger, had only brought with me a pocket Derringer, and this, though it would

throw a good-sized bullet thirty feet or so accurately enough, yet only took one cartridge at a time, and was quite unfit for a scrimmage with well-armed, determined men. So, thus, if I got the best of them, it must be by force of wit, and not of weapons; and, turning it all over in my mind, I sat quietly, and pretended to read my paper, conscious that every movement I made was watched by hidden eyes.

I resolved at length to push on for Southampton Downs, and trust to the speed and breeding of my horses for escape. How could I gain time and get a good start? This was the question. I determined to make a pretence of giving the bank-notes to the landlord to take care of until my return. Of course, it was to be a pretence only, for I did not intend losing them quite so easily as that. By doing this I should gain most probably a little time, for if he were an accomplice he would not open the packet until after I had gone, while, if he were not, those concerned would not attempt to take it from him until towards night, when everything would be quiet, and the various idlers about have disappeared. So I went into the little bedroom, where was my "swag," and, taking care that I was not observed, I removed the parcels of notes from my belt-pouch and secured them in a pocket. Then putting in their stead a folded newspaper, I went outside and strolled carelessly about. Presently I appeared to have come to a sudden determination, and, going into the bar, put a few questions to the landlord about the bridle-path over the mountains, and so forth. Then, taking the pouch from around my waist, I asked him if he had such a thing in the house as a piece of sealing-wax. He thought he had, and soon found a piece. So, carefully fastening up the pouch with string, and sealing it in several places with my signet ring, I told him these were most important matters, which I had brought there for Mr. Harper, and which he would probably come for on the morrow; that I was going on to Southampton Downs to spend Christmas; that he was to tell Mr. Harper so, give him the papers, and take his receipt. To this he assented, and in such an artless way, that I was convinced that he was in no way connected with the scheme. I had no hesitation in thus victimising him, for he would, I was sure, give them up upon the demand of two or three armed men, and was not likely to allow himself to sustain much injury protecting other people's property, so my mind was quite easy on that score.

The next thing now was to get away as soon as possible. In this I was unluckily hindered by a most tremendous thunderstorm, which came down with all the suddenness and violence of a semi-tropical latitude, and which was particularly unfortunate for me just at that time, for it would soften the ground and make my tracks so much the more distinct. I at first thought of taking only one horse, as it would delay me to lead another along the mountain sidelings, but remembering that to leave one would only be giving my enemies better means of pursuit, I decided to take them both with me, and let one go on the road. And so, having carefully saddled up, I



rode out of the yard and started for my perilous journey across the mountains.

First there came a tedious ascent of about two miles, most of which was in view of the little bush township below, then a level mile along a spur of the range, and then a second very steep rise, or "pinch." At the top of this pinch, which was nearly a mile long, were a few deserted "gunyahs," the remains of a former blackfellows' camp; and as these made a good landmark in the otherwise monotonous forest, I determined to plant my notes, so that even if I were overtaken the Philistines would be disappointed of their prey. I wrapped them up carefully in a corner torn off my waterproof sheet, and tied them with a strip of my pocket-handkerchief. And now what to do with them was the difficulty. To get off my horse would have been to leave footmarks in the soft ground, which the keen eye of a bushman would soon see and follow, while there was no overhanging tree I could climb; but close to the side of the track I espied a deserted ant-hill, luckily enough, and into the hole at the top of this I dropped my little bundle. Then, riding on another mile or so, I dismounted, and, unsaddling the grey mare, I planted the saddle, with valise, blankets, and all attached, in a large hollow stump a little distance from the road. Then, taking off her bridle, I let her go, and away she went at a gallop. I kept the chestnut, both because his colour was less conspicuous at night, and because the mare, having been born and bred at the Downs station, would most likely make for there, and so announce my approach.

I pushed on after this as fast as the fading light would allow, and, though at first I was able to ride at a sharp canter, the road soon got bad and narrow, and darkness coming rapidly on, I was reduced to a walk. I calculated I should have about two hours' start of my pursuers. It would be about that time before they would find out the trick I had played them, get their horses, and come after me, and if I could but cross the ranges without any accident or delay and get down to the plains beyond I was safe. My only fear was of losing the track in the darkness, wandering off on either side, and getting "bushed," in which case my pursuers would soon find out they had overrun me; and when morning light came they could follow my tracks easily enough, and run me down. Or perhaps one of them might know a shorter track over the mountains, and thus, getting ahead of me, cut me off. But still the chances were greatly in favour of me, and cheerfully I pushed along as fast as the road and darkness allowed. The road gradually rose, surmounting crest after crest, now running along a spur, and now skirting some still higher point by winding along its side, and these sidelings were dangerous, for the rain had made them as slippery as possible, and it was just as much as I could do to keep my horse on his legs. Above me towered perhaps a lofty peak, while below, far below, a thousand feet or more, I could hear the rush of water along the ravines, and the path, little more in most places than a foot wide, clung to the face of the mountain with a sheer rise on one side

and on the other this fearful fall. If my horse had but once lost his footing nothing would have saved us rolling down into the depths below.

The night eventually turned out clear and starlight, which was better even than moonlight for bush travelling, for the sheen of the moon would have so lighted up the ground as to have made it difficult for me to distinguish the track in the general glitter. But now I could make it out clearly enough, and on I rode, cheerful and confident, until all at once the tables were woefully turned. I had come to a place where the range broke, leaving a channel cut out as it were between two hills. For nearly a mile we had been gradually descending instead of climbing as before. And now, as we came carefully down, I heard in the distance a low, dull roar among the trees, and I thought of the thunderstorm among the hills, and knew that I was cut off by a mountain torrent.

I got off my horse and went cautiously through the little belt of scrub that fringed the creek down to where the boiling, foaming flood rushed along between two rocky banks with irresistible force. The moving mass of water, tearing madly down, could be but imperfectly seen in the black shadow thrown by the overhanging trees, but its roar in the semi-darkness of the night was enough to appal the stoutest heart. To have attempted a crossing would have been sheer madness and sudden death, for no horse or man ever born could have swum that twenty feet of raging waters, but would have been swept away in an instant and dashed to pieces upon the rocks below. What could I do? I could wait for the falling of the creek, and how soon it would fall sufficiently for me to get across would depend upon the amount of rain that had fallen upon the hills above, for these mountain creeks fall as quickly almost as they rise. But I dared not wait there, while comparatively soon my pursuers would come up, and should I not have been able before that to cross, nothing could save me falling into their hands. It was of no use I knew going up or down the creek, the track would have been sure to have struck it at the most favourable place for a crossing, and I should gain nothing by that. A lighted match, and a bit of dry bark for a torch, and the bushmen following me, would have read off my tracks, and run me down with the certainty of a bloodhound. No, my only chance I saw was to make back over the road I had come for between three or four miles to a spot where I had noticed a track leading off to the right, and taking no doubt a course higher up the mountains. I had been a little in doubt at the time whether it would not be a better one to pursue, but the one I had come seemed to be so much the better beaten of the two that I had decided upon following it. If I now could but get back there in time, I could turn off, go higher up the range, head the creek, or else cross where it was comparatively narrow and shallow, and so baffle my pursuers after all. But if I did not get back before they came to the turning I was lost, I knew that. The intervening three or four miles was nearly all along a hogsback spur, merely a narrow

path running along the crest of a ridge with a deep drop on each side, and thinly-scattered timber, giving no chance of escape. There was not a minute to be lost, so, mounting again my good chestnut, I urged him for my life along the narrow, giddy path. Reckless of his frequent slips and stumbles, poor horse, in the broken, uneven ground, I pressed on, half expecting every moment that we would both roll down the fearful slope on either hand. But I was riding for my life. Every now and then I paused for a minute to listen. The sigh of the night wind among the trees, or the rush of a swollen stream down in the ravines below, was all I could hear. Then on again along the slippery path, and presently another pause. At last I came to the end of the perilous spur and listened a moment before I descended to a level below. Hark!—do I hear something? Listen!—a noise as of a horse's foot-stroke! I peered forward into the darkness; I could see nothing. Listen again—a man's laugh, surely! I jumped off my horse and threw myself down with my ear to the ground. There were men and horses close at hand coming up the mountain.

For a moment I was paralysed. What could I do? Three or four minutes and they would be upon me. It was of no use going back. So I seized my horse's bridle, and led him as far off the track as I could, the ridge having flattened a little before the descent commenced. It was not more than twenty feet off at most, and here, covering my horse as well as I could by a welcome tree, I crouched down and awaited their coming. If my horse is only quiet, thought I, and they have no dogs with them, they may pass me in the darkness and I escape them yet. How slowly they seemed to come, as distinctly I could hear the tread of their horses as they toiled up the hill—nearer and nearer. My horse might whinny, so I took his muzzle in my hands. Nearer still—they stop—no, they are coming on. I could hear voices talking now. What are they saying? Hark!

"I tell you I saw a figure move at the top here against the sky."

"Why, you fool, he's away miles by this time the other side of Baramba Creek."

"Well, but supposing the creek is up, and he couldn't get across, and he's took the back track, who's the fool then?"

"Right you are, old man; I'll get down and look at his tracks. Give us a match."

I could not see them as yet, but presently I heard the crack of a match, and a little glimmer of light tinged the darkness over the edge of the hill. I scarcely breathed.

"No, Bill, there's only the one track here."

"Come on, will you, you two?" cries a third voice, which seemed familiar to me; "you'll fool away the whole night in this way."

Some gruff rejoinder, which I did not catch, and on they come. Presently they appear over the crest of the hill—one, two, three—mounted men. Now they come close—they are passing me—they stop!—no, they are going on. They are nearly by—stay! one stops again—he is dismounting. Quiet!

"Come on, do, you fool! What are you stopping for now?"

"Fool or no fool, I'm going to have a look at these tracks for myself."

I could hear my heart beat in the dead silence. "Look out!" he suddenly roared. "I told you so. Here's his back tracks just made; he's about here somewheres; mind yourselves."

"Mind his barker!" cried the third; "get behind a tree."

Concealment was no longer of any use; I had to make a run for it. I drew my Derringer from my pocket, stealthily threw the bridle over my horse's head, and climbed into the saddle. Pausing for a moment, I fired. Then digging my spurs into poor "Red Lancer," I dashed over the brow and down the hill into the darkness. I heard a bullet whistle over my head, but on we went down the hill at racing speed. We have escaped, I thought, after all, when suddenly the horse gave way underneath me, the earth seemed to leap up and strike me, and over and over and over we rolled until all was darkness and oblivion.

### III.

WHERE was I? I could not think. What had happened? I could not move. I seemed to be in some painful dream, to know it was a dream, and yet be powerless to wake. The hum of voices was in my ear. Whose voices were they? I would get up. I could not; my limbs were numbed, I was going round, everything was going round and around and around again.

Again I seemed to wake. Still the voices close to me; what do they say? I tried to listen, but they seemed all confused. I tried again.

"I tell you he must have planted them; he wouldn't have given that stuff to the boss at the public if he hadn't the real ones about him."

"Well, he's pretty cunning anyhow, ain't he? He's got 'em stowed somewheres about him."

"Stowed! Where could he have stowed them? Haven't we ripped up his saddle and his boots and everything? They're along with the other horse, the grey one, and the swag. Let's wake him up and make him split; it's quite time he was awake anyway."

Before this, I had remembered all the ride—the swollen creek—the back track—the men coming up the mountain—the pistol-shot—my horse's fall. I heard footsteps coming over and some one kicked me roughly in the ribs. With an effort I opened my eyes, and there looking down upon me, and holding a firestick in his hand, I saw the face of—Upton, my accountant at the bank.

Another kick, followed by "Here, I'll soon wake him up," and the sharp prick of a knife-point in my shoulder, restored me in a measure to my senses. I tried to rise but found that my hands and feet were tied. A few feet off was a burning log, and standing by the side a still steaming "billy" of tea. One man was sitting by the fire smoking, while two were leaning over me, and a little distance off I could see their

horses tied to a tree One of the men by me was Upton.

"Now look here, Mr. Cleon," said he, "you're pretty cute, but you're not quite cute enough, you see. We want those notes and we mean to have them, so out with it at once, and tell us where they are."

"Yes," broke in the other, "we've had trouble enough with you already, and if you don't blab at once we'll cut your throat and have done with it."

"Give me a few minutes to think where I am," I said; "I am sore, and bruised, and bothered, and I don't know where I am or what I'm doing."

"You're not wanted to know," said Upton; "come, none of your hatching any of your plots, but out with it at once; where have you planted the notes?"

"Give me time to think," I said; "that fall has stunned me; give me time."

"Well, now look here," replied Upton, "I'll give you five minutes by my watch to make a clean breast of it, and then, if you don't, as sure as you're alive, I'll blow your brains out;" and pointing his revolver threateningly at me he went back to the fire with the others.

I would have had no hesitation in telling them where the notes were, for, having done my best in the interests of the bank, I could not be expected to sacrifice my life for them. But if I do tell them, I thought, where the notes are, may they not murder me after, on the principle of "dead men tell no tales"? And yet if they do murder me and then find out I have told them wrong, the notes for which they have schemed so much would be lost to them for ever. How could I make sure of my life, and outwit?

But my ideas were rudely broken in on by Upton, who, calling out "Time's up!" came across from the fire, revolver in hand. "Now, mister, out with it; where are the notes?"

"If I tell you," said I, "what will you do with me."

"Why we'll let you go," he replied.

"Well, Upton," I said, "it will do you no good to kill me, for if you do you'll never find the notes where I have hidden them if you look for fifty years. But I'll tell you where they are."

In another moment I would have told him where they really were, but a certain evil sparkle that came into his eyes at my last words made me change my mind.

"You know," said I, "the top of the hill going down into Thuringowa. Well, just a mile this side of the top of that hill you'll see a hollow charred stump a little off the track on the left hand side going from here. Inside that stump you'll find my blankets and valise, and—"

"That'll do," said Bill, as they called the third man, "we'll pretty soon find it; and now let's be off at once, it'll be daylight before we know where we are. Let's settle this chap first and then step it."

"No, no," said Upton, "we won't settle him, for he's a slippery customer, and may be fooling us after all. We'll make him fast to this log here if we get the notes all right; and if not, we'll have him to talk to after."

"That's the ticket, boss!" replied the third man. "Hold on till I get something to fasten him down with, and we'll have him snug in two twos."

And, returning presently with a piece of creeper or vine, the wretches carried me to a log close by, and, laying me along, face downwards, they drew my arms tightly together, and then my legs, and made them fast with seizings underneath, just where the log was raised off the ground by a protruding branch on its under side. Placing a short piece of stick in my mouth, they secured it behind, and effectually gagged me. Then getting their horses, they had a last look at me and rode away, "Bill" remarking with a hideous laugh as he went, "Look at the fire, boys; how's it burning up? We'll have to hurry back, or see if he won't get toasted!"

Until then I had not realised the full horror of my situation, and, to do the scoundrels justice, I do not think they had either. They had bound me—I really believe thoughtlessly—to the very log by the side of which they had lighted their fire, and the upper end of which would soon be in a blaze. I was left embracing the tree about half-way down, where it was perhaps a couple of feet through, and their fire had been lighted by one of the upper branches. The tree was on a slope, the branches lowermost, and the fire was travelling slowly upwards, while I was watching it with bloodshot eyes. I was doomed! Before they could get back the fire would have reached me, and all would be over. The smoke even now sometimes almost stifled me. The heat I could feel travelling up the inside hollow pipe of the tree, and already warming it ready for the devouring flame. In vain I struggled to break the ties that bound my hands and feet. Useless I knew; that green vine was stronger than the newest rope, and my poor bruised, aching limbs only ached the more. How far had they to go? I could not tell, for I did not know where I was. Somewhere near the hill going down which my horse fell with me I supposed; and if so, they had a long way to go to reach my plant. And even if they got back in time, would they let me go? They must; they could not see me slowly burn and scorch away. There were no men so inhuman as that. But they would not be back in time. The fire was creeping up nearer and nearer; the heat and smoke were stifling me; and this was Christmas Eve—it must be Christmas morning now—that I was to have spent with my wife—my wife! Should I never see her again? I would get free—another useless struggle—the gag was choking me, I could not breathe. The fire comes nearer and nearer—it is scorching me—it is burning into my brain—fire everywhere. My wife—Marian—child!

\* \* \* \*

I was lying in a cool bedroom opening out on the verandah at Southampton Downs. My wife was sitting by me, while my head was swathed in soft, wet linen. Not for some days after did they finish the story of that fearful night.

It appeared that my wife's mare, "Lady Jane," after I let her go, made her way to her old home,



jumping all the fences. Anxious at my non-appearance, my wife had left her bedroom, and was out on the verandah watching, when up came the mare with a whinny and covered with foam. Directly suspecting something wrong, she had raised the alarm, and a party had started off in search. They crossed the creek that had stopped me higher up, and, riding on for Thuringowa, had seen to the right of the track the blazing log. Thinking they might find traces of me, they turned off to it, and then, to their horror, they saw me lying on the log insensible, enveloped in smoke, and the fire almost reaching my head. They cut me loose and took me home.

The notes were safe after all in the ant-hill where I had planted them. All three of the men were subsequently caught. "Upton" turned out to be an escaped Victorian convict named Morris, and was hanged in Armidale Gaol for the murder

of the real Upton when on his way up to join the bank at Windsor. The young fellow had spoken freely to Morris, his fellow-traveller, of his destination and business, and the latter had murdered him off the road below Tamworth, where his body was afterwards found, and stealing his papers had subsequently concocted the scheme. He it was who had tried to enter my bedroom, with the object of getting my safe key, and had abstracted the cartridges from my revolvers. The man with the valueless cheque was a confederate, who was to have made an attack with him upon me in the bank, but some little thing occurred each time to prevent them. The two others were sentenced to penal servitude for life. I myself perfectly recovered, and not long afterwards brought my wife home to England.

And so ends my story of a "Perilous Ride."

EDWIN DOUDNEY.

## NATURAL HISTORY NOTES.

### THE GIGANTIC CHESNUT OF THE PACIFIC.

NOTHING can be more agreeable to the pedestrian in the hot season at Rarotonga than to sit at midday on the primitive stone seat invariably placed at the roots of ancient chesnut-trees. The chesnut (*Inocarpus edulis*) is known to the natives of the Hervey Group as the *u*.\* If undisturbed by the hand of man it is apt to take entire possession of the best soil. It especially loves the banks of a stream. Laved by the mountain torrents, the roots are often so fantastically gnarled as to be worthy of the study of a painter. The delicate glossy leaves of spring (October) are of a pale green, in striking contrast to the thick dark leaves of the past season lying underneath. In the South Pacific only the banyan, caral, and *vi*† trees are deciduous; so that the islands are clothed with evergreen. The chesnut is speedily covered with a mass of tiny pale-yellow flowers, which continue to make their appearance—though more sparingly—until the end of April. The whole neighbourhood thus becomes redolent with the delicate odour.‡ As the young leaves mature, the old ones drop silently; so that by the end of the year the foliage is entirely new.

The chesnut of the Pacific is a very beautiful tree. Next to the cocoa-nut palm, it is lord of the landscape. Rising ten or twelve feet without a branch, it often attains the height of sixty feet. The leaves alternate, are oblong, and sometimes are fourteen inches in length. The fruit hangs singly or in clusters of twos and threes from slender twigs, and occasionally from the trunk

itself.\* It is flat, irregularly shaped, and contains but one seed. When young and hot out of the oven, it is palatable and nutritious; but as the season advances it becomes hard and almost tasteless. A chesnut lying before me—pod included—is five inches by four, weighing eleven ounces. But to get at the seed a hatchet is required. A few days ago a pupil of mine chopped off the top of a finger in this process. The fibrous pod, from one-third to half an inch in thickness, must be removed ere the kernel is cooked in the native oven. This seeming drawback enables the natives to store up the ripe nuts in pits, well-lined with leaves, against the season of scarcity. About three hundred nuts are required for one pit. They keep good until chesnuts are in season again. As the ripe nuts are very hard and difficult of digestion, it is customary to grate them, mix the pulp with cocoa-nut, and bake the whole as a pudding. In this way an excellent dish is furnished with little trouble. A man who has two or three pits of chesnuts, as many of *mai*, or sour bread-fruit paste, with a number of old cocoa-nuts, is well provided for against the season of scarcity (*i.e.*, the so-called winter of the tropics). In a word, the chesnut is one of the main supports of human life in the volcanic islands of the Pacific. It comes in season just before the bread-fruit; and now at the end of August—long after the bread-fruit has disappeared—there are still ripe nuts on the trees. Underneath, the ground is covered with them. In colour the ripe nut is of a rich yellowish red.

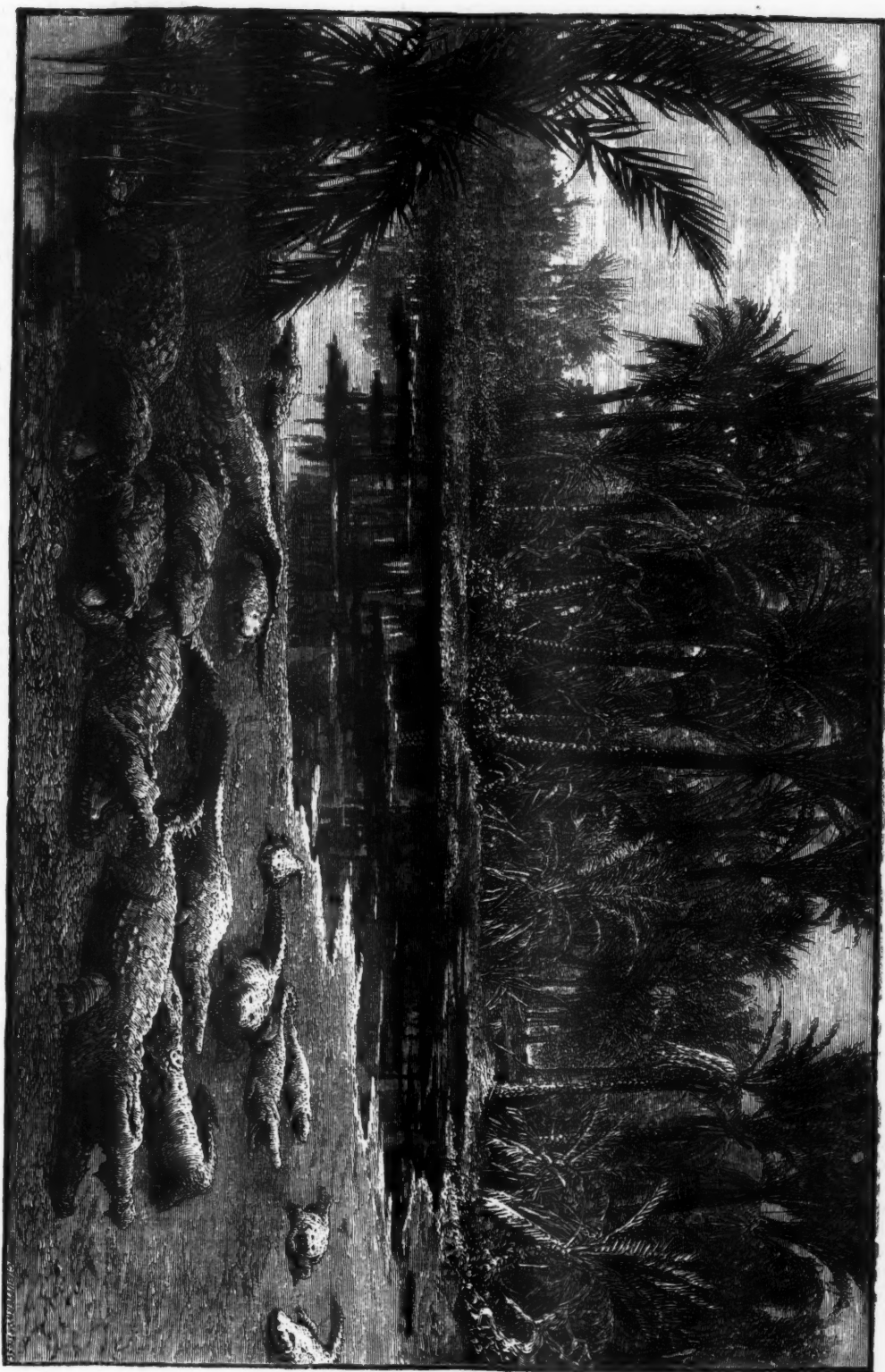
The trunk of a fine chesnut-tree in my neighbourhood measures thirty-six feet in circumference. The natural inference would be a diameter of twelve feet. Such, however, is not the case. The

\* The *ifi* of Samoa, and the *mape* of the Tahitian Group.

† *Spondias dulcis*.

‡ Captain Turpie, of the Mission bark, assures me that often, when four or five miles out at sea off the islands of this group at sunset, he has been delighted at the fragrance wafted by the land breeze. This would be from the blossoms of the chesnut, pandanus, orange, and citron trees.

\* A famous event; anciently supposed to be a special mark of Divine favour.



IN THE TROPICS.

[From a Photograph.]

heart of the tree is only two feet in diameter; whilst in every direction are slender shafts or buttresses—from one to two inches in thickness—projecting gracefully at the bottom some four or five feet from the trunk. There are few more interesting objects than a chesnut throwing aloft its mighty branches covered with the densest foliage, the vast weight supported only by a slender trunk running out into a number of plank-like shafts. In the recesses thus formed children love to play at hide and seek. Some of these buttresses yield a musical sound when struck; so that in heathen times it was usual to beat them instead of gongs, in order to collect the population in the cool of the afternoon in the open air to rehearse their parts in the semi-dramatic performances of those days.

The sap of the *Inocarpus edulis* is blood-red. Its timber is soft and used only for burning coral lime.

Proprietorship in this useful tree varies. In some islands the owner of the soil claims the fruit, but usually it is free to all, being rarely planted. Thus happily we need no poor laws.

Old men delight to tell of those who in the cruel days of idolatry escaped from their cannibal foes by hiding in this tree. Sometimes it was the thick foliage that concealed them; at other times it was the hollow formed by the branching out of giant limbs at one point. In other stories collectors of ripe nuts, oblivious of danger, were surrounded and speared from beneath; men and nuts cooked in the same oven to furnish a meal for the murderers.

The gigantic chesnut of the Pacific attains to a great age. When greatly decayed, it renews its vigour by sending down into the soil roots from the perfect branches. In time a new trunk is thus formed *inside* the decayed one. Chesnuts are still bearing fruit on Mangaia which were planted by Amu, a chief who ruled that island four centuries ago. When very old the buttresses disappear, and so its distinctive appearance is lost. The axe and natural decay of the more exposed parts may account for this.

The leaf of the chesnut from time immemorial furnished the extempore kite of native boys, large kites of native cloth being used by men alone.

WILLIAM WYATT GILL, B.A.

Rarotonga, South Pacific.

#### THE WILLOW WARBLER.

In "Longman's Magazine" for May of this year there was an interesting paper by Mr. John Burroughs, entitled "An American's Impressions of some British Song Birds." After speaking with praise of the chaffinch, the thrush, and the blackbird, he goes on to say: "The most melodious strain I heard, and the only one that exhibited to the full the best qualities of the American songsters, proceeded from a bird quite unknown to fame, in the British Islands at least. I refer to the willow warbler, or willow wren, as it is also called (*Sylvia Trochilus*), a little brown bird that builds a dome-shaped nest upon the ground,

and lines it with feathers. White says it has a 'sweet, plaintive note,' which is but half the truth. It has a long, tender, delicious warble, not wanting in strength and volume, but eminently pure and sweet—the song of the chaffinch refined and idealised. The song is, perhaps, in the minor key, feminine and not masculine, but it touches the heart, \*

'That strain again; it had a dying fall.'

The song of the willow warbler has a dying fall; no other bird-song is so touching in this respect. It mounts up round and full, then runs down the scale, and expires upon the air in a gentle murmur. I heard the bird everywhere, yet many country people of whom I inquired did not know the bird, or confounded it with some other. It is too fine a song for the ordinary English ear; there is not noise enough in it. The white-throat is much more famous; it has a louder, coarser voice; it sings with great emphasis and assurance, and is a much better John Bull than the little willow warbler."

The description here given of the song of the willow warbler is very full, and accurate, and appreciative, but Mr. Burroughs is mistaken in thinking that this delightful songster is quite unknown to fame. It has some very warm admirers in the British Islands, and for the last thirty or forty years the present writer has been making known its note and name to every one with whom he has walked and talked in country lanes and woodland places in spring or autumn. For the song of the willow warbler is not only unceasing and ubiquitous in May, but it is heard again in August and up to the time of the autumn migration.

In "Lyrics, Sylvan and Sacred," published in 1878, there is a rondeau, entitled "The Willow Warbler," in which several points of the American's genial description of its song have been anticipated. It has been often quoted, but may be here given as proving that the sweet cadences of this favourite songster are not unappreciated by English ears.

Sweet, soft, and low, in wood and lane,  
The Willow Warbler weaves its chain  
Of melody—a plaintive song  
That seems to breathe of ancient wrong  
And dimly-recollected pain.

Its melting cadences retain  
Your ear again and yet again,  
Through notes more clear and blithe and strong—  
Sweet, soft, and low.

Thus after Life's most happy strain  
A minor music will remain,  
Recurring oft and lingering long,  
And heard the gayest scenes among;  
Of lost joys hinting not in vain—  
Sweet, soft, and low.

But I am happy to quote the beautiful words of another writer, the Rev. T. A. Holland, of Poyning's Rectory, Suffolk, author of "Dryburgh Abbey



and other Poems." The following sonnet appeared some years ago:—

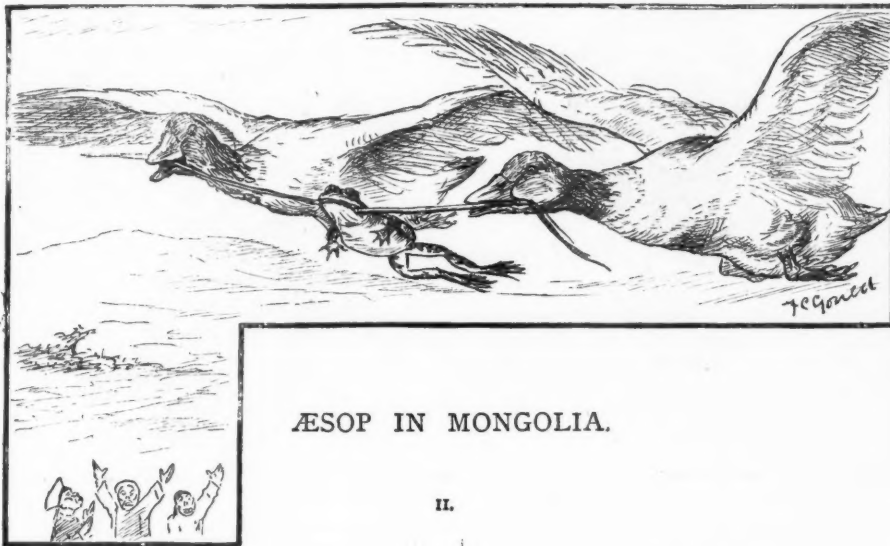
Whose is that airy laugh, that liquid song,  
 Poured from the highest willow's highest spray,  
 Which rises, falls, and faints, then dies away,  
 Repeated every day, and all day long,  
 While glows the sun our summer bowers among?  
 Poised on a leaf, within the shimmering ray,  
 Behold, of form minute, an agile fay:  
 To him those sweet ecstatic notes belong!  
 Ah! let not grander birds his carol scorn,  
 As through still darkling groves its cadence thrills,  
 Rung like a silver larum of the morn,  
 To rouse warm-cushioned, wing-enfolded bills;  
 Till every downy throat conspire to raise  
 The matin anthem of their Maker's praise.

It will be seen that Mr. Holland, in his admirable description of the willow warbler's song—

"Which rises, falls, and faints, then dies away"—

does not associate the idea of melancholy with its silvery cadence; but I think the general verdict of its admirers would agree with Gilbert White's opinion that the prevailing note is "plaintive." At all events I hope enough has been said to wipe away the reproach that the willow warbler is quite unknown and unappreciated in England, and perhaps to lead some readers of this paper to make the acquaintance of this melodious songster.

RICHARD WILTON.



ÆSOP IN MONGOLIA.

II.

#### THE FROG AND THE TWO GESE.

TWO geese, when about to start southwards on their annual autumn migration, were entreated by a frog to take him with them. On the geese expressing their willingness to do so if a means of conveyance could be devised, the frog produced a stalk of strong grass, and made the two geese take it one by each end, while he clung to it by his mouth in the middle. In this manner the three were making their journey successfully when they were noticed from below by some men, who loudly expressed their admiration of the device, and wondered who had been clever enough to discover it. The vainglorious frog, opening his mouth to say "It was I," lost his hold, fell to the earth, and was dashed to pieces.

*Moral.* Do not let pride induce you to speak when safety requires you to be silent.

#### STRAIN AT A GNAT AND SWALLOW A CAMEL.

A traveller noticed a parrot clearing the water with his wing, and asking what it meant, the parrot replied: "I clear the water to avoid drinking flies and thus destroying life." The parrot flew off, and a little farther on the same traveller saw the same bird perched on a wall saying his prayers. Taking a liking for such a pious bird, the traveller went up to where he was, and found him busily feasting on worms!

On the same journey the traveller entered an abode, and found the master of the house feasting a priest whom he had invited to perform services. On the ground, in front of the priest, was a piece of gold. The priest slyly stuck a piece of wax on his praying sceptre, and thus, unnoticed, picked up the gold and put it into the bosom of his coat. As the priest left the house he happened to see a

piece of thread sticking to his dress. This thread he pompously returned to the master of the house, saying that it would be sinful in him, a priest, to take anything out of the house that had not been given him.

*Moral.* Do not be a hypocrite.

#### THE PAINTED FOX.

A fox finding a deserted dyer's sink containing blue colour, painted itself all over of a beautiful azure hue, and went and showed itself to the other animals. They did not recognise him, and asked him, "Who are you?" The fox replied, "I am the king of the beasts."

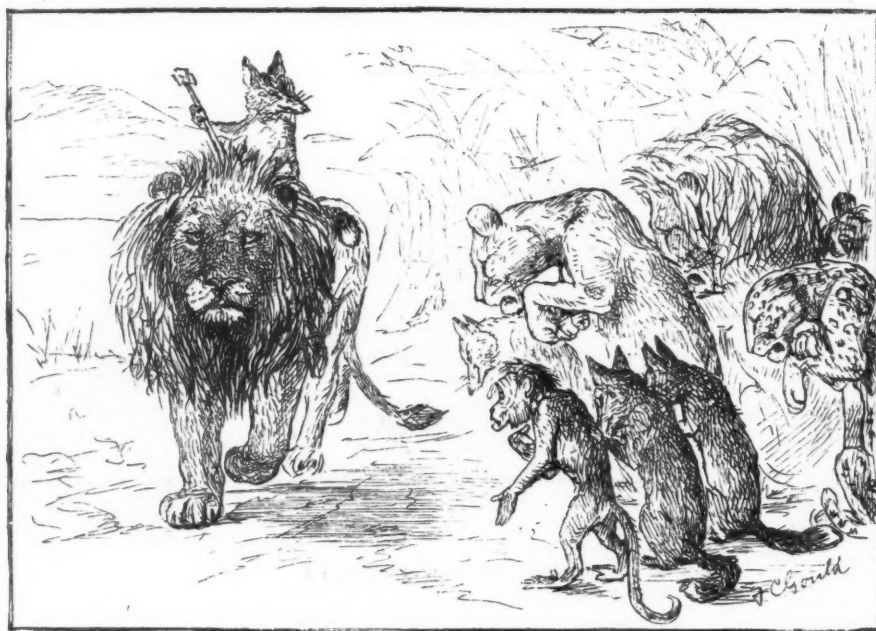
you can decide the question, and know whether or not your king is a fox."

When that night came all the other foxes howled aloud, and the blue fox, afraid lest its hair should fall off, howled in a low voice, but still loud enough for the other beasts to hear him. They thus knew that their pretended king was but a fox after all, and the lion, enraged at being deceived, killed him with one stroke of his paw.

*Moral.* Though you attain to high rank, do not oppress your inferiors.

#### THE PEARL BORER.

A lad learned to bore pearls, and, priding him-



"THE KING OF THE BEASTS."

The lions and other creatures then all did him homage, and the fox, when he travelled, rode on the lion's back, lording it over all classes of animals generally, but carrying it with an especially high hand in the assembly of the foxes. After a time the fox sent provisions to his mother, who hearing the whole tale, sent back word to her son not to trouble himself about her, but to occupy himself with the affairs of his kingdom. The messenger foxes hearing this, filled with envy, went to the other beasts and said, "This king of yours is but a fox after all; if you honour him, why don't you honour us; he is just like us."

"Like you," said the other beasts, "why, he is a different colour altogether."

The foxes replied, "As to the colour, wait till the first month of spring. In that month, on the night of the star called Bos, we foxes howl. If we don't howl our hair falls off. On that night

self on the attainment, learned nothing more. Other lads, his companions, learned many things, and succeeded in life to such an extent that he who could bore pearls before they could do anything was left far behind them, and was glad to hire himself out to them as their servant.

*Moral.* Do not be too proud of any attainment, and always be diligent to learn more.

#### THE BAD-TEMPERED MONKEY.

A sparrow had its nest half way up a tree, in the top of which dwelt a monkey. After a heavy rain, the sparrow, snug and dry in its nest, saw the monkey shaking his dripping body, and addressed him thus: "Comrade, your hands are skilful, your strength great, your intellect clever, why do you live in such a miserable state? Can't you build a snug nest like mine?" The monkey,

angered at the complacency of the sparrow, replied: "Am I to be mocked by an evil creature like you? Your nest is snug, is it?" So saying he destroyed it and threw it down.

*Moral.* Do not talk with a passionate man.

#### FOX AND BIRD.

A fox and a bird made friends and lived together. While the parent bird was away searching for food, the fox used to devour one of the young birds. This continued till all the fledgelings were gone. The mother bird, then aware of the fate of her young, resolved to be avenged, and, finding a trap set, decoyed the fox to it and saw him caught.

*Moral.* Beware of an evil-intentioned man.

#### MOUSE AND ELEPHANT.

A mouse fell into a pit and could not get out. An elephant hearing its little piteous voice, looked into the pit, and, seeing a mouse, lowered down his tail, which the mouse laid hold of and thus reached the surface. The little animal thanked his great deliverer, and said he would never forget the kindness he received. The elephant said he had helped him only because he had been moved by pity, and disclaimed any hope of being repaid

for his trouble, and dismissed the mouse with a benediction.

Years passed by, and the same elephant, old and infirm, fell into a ravine too narrow to permit him to rise. This same mouse, seeing his distress, collected all the mice in these parts, and scraped away one side of the ravine, making it wide enough for the elephant to rise.

*Moral.* Be helpful to others and you will be helped yourself.

#### PEBBLES FOR JEWELS.

A set of half-witted people went to the sea to gather precious stones. Not being well able to discriminate between true and false stones, they took for precious a lot of common pebbles, thinking they must be good because they were of bright colour and heavy. The really precious stones, being of uncertain colour and light weight, they rejected as worthless.

*Moral.* The generality of people make the same mistake with regard to religion. Wealth, fame, honour, look brighter and better, and are preferred to the fruits of religion; but in reality those who reject religion for worldly things are rejecting diamonds and choosing common pebbles.

J. GILMOUR.

### A SCOTCH STORY; AS TRUE AS IT IS STRANGE.

WE believe that Scotch history surpasses every other in point of romantic interest. Stories full of terror, stories full of pathos, stories which mingle those qualities together in a wonderful way, abound in the national records, and are familiar to historical readers. But in the by-ways of Scotch literature, in obscure outlying fields of research, there are found many more of a private and domestic character which cast a strange spell over the imagination, and some of these curiously interlink themselves with well-known names and fortunes. An example of this kind, partially related long ago, has lately received fresh illumination, and to it we call the reader's attention.

The family of the Gordons figure conspicuously amongst the Scotch clans of the fifteenth century. Alexander Seaton Gordon, or the first Earl of Huntly—"cock of the North," as he was called—is caught sight of at that time, on the border of the Highlands, busily employed in increasing his domains—in plain English, appropriating land without any other title than that which the strong claim over the weak.

George, the second earl, married Joanna, third daughter of James I of Scotland; and a son of the same earl formed a matrimonial alliance with a sister, and sole heir of the Earl of Sutherland. Thus allied, the Gordons rose to a high position, and at the opening of the sixteenth century lived with regal splendour at Strathbogie Castle.

George, the fourth earl, became further enriched by monastic spoils at the period of the Reformation, but, carrying his ambition too far, he came to an untimely end. His son John was beheaded, and Mary Queen of Scots, at the instance of her brother Murray, attended the execution of the unhappy young man. The Gordons were now at the bottom of fortune's wheel; presently they were again at the top. Earl George had a daughter named Jane, who in 1556 had reached her twentieth year—a lady of no great beauty, but, judging from her portrait at a later date, and from her subsequent history, she must have possessed considerable abilities, a strong will, and an adequate capacity of holding her own. Just about this period James, Earl of Bothwell, who is described as of a turbulent and restless disposition, was at enmity with the Earl of Arran, and with Earl Murray too. He, however, leagued himself with the young Earl of Huntly, who was brother to Lady Jane just mentioned; and, together with Huntly, took the side of Mary against the nobles opposed to her policy, and these persons were reported to the English court as Mary's "new counsellors." Bothwell became Warden of the Border Marshes, on which account the English representative told Secretary Cecil, he despaired of business being properly managed, for, said he, Bothwell "neither fears God nor loves justice;" he is "as naughty a man as liveth, and much



given to the most detestable vices." At this period also Lady Jane Gordon became affianced to Bothwell. There is no proof of any love having existed between them, and it would appear that the alliance arose out of the intimacy of the bridegroom and the bride's brother; and out of intrigues with a view to political combinations common in that age, and difficult—even impossible—for us now to unravel. At all events, Jane got a bad husband—a man ungainly in his appearance, hateful to many of the nobility, violent and unscrupulous, notorious for profligacy, and, on the eve of his marriage, said to have been "clanned by a Danish wife,"—whatever that might mean. Also, he is described as having been "quyetly marreit or hand fast" to Janet Betoun, of Cranstoun Riddell, heroine of "The Lay of the Last Minstrel," who, marvellous to say, was afterwards "charged with administering philtres for riveting the infatuated affection of Mary to him, which, indeed, is not easily explained." It seems incredible that the woman jilted by Bothwell should have helped to get him married to Mary, but the stories of that day are full of what is incredible.

The contract of marriage between Bothwell and Jane Gordon is still in existence, dated 12th February, 1565, and it is signed by Queen Mary, by George, Earl of Huntly, by James, Earl Bothwell, by the bride, and by Elizabeth, Countess of Huntly, "with her hand laid on the pen of the Lord Bishop of Galloway;" from this we conclude that she could not write herself. Mary and Darnley took a great interest in the wedding, and her Majesty presented the bride with a dress "of cloth of silver, lined with taffeta." She also, ten years afterwards, in what is called her "testamentary inventory," bequeathed to Lady Jane a coiff, garnished with rubies, pearls, and garnets. The wedding ceremony, if performed according to the wish of the queen, would have taken place in the chapel of Holyrood House, with the accompaniments of Roman Catholic worship. But instead of this, the bride and bridegroom went to the Canongate Church, near the palace gates, and there were united by the bride's relative, Gordon, Bishop of Galloway. In the Kirk Session Records of the parish there is a record, dated February 24th, 1565-6, of James, Earl Bothwell, and Jane Gordon, sister of the Earls of Huntly, being "married in our own kirk." Popery had been disestablished; Presbyterianism had taken its place. Marriages had come within the jurisdiction of the kirk, and here was a bishop of the old church marrying two people together, after the Presbyterian fashion. John Knox informs us, "the queen was desirous that the marriage might be made in the chapel at the mass, which the Earl of Bothwell would by no means grant;" for it appears that this unprincipled person set his face against Popish worship, and refused to enter the Chapel Royal when the infant prince was baptized, "because it was done against the points of their religion."

Neither Mary nor Darnley were present at the ceremony, but they gave a wedding banquet the first day, and continued the festivities for five

days, with jousts and tournaments, and, says the chronicler, Lindsay, "there were made six knights of Fife at the time." So there must have been splendid doings that week in Holyrood Palace: a grand display of Scotch chivalry and beauty; magnificent feasts in the royal hall; gay dresses and superb decorations; nobles and their attendants, titled ladies and their maids; men in armour with squires and heralds in the courtyard; multitudes assembled to behold the encounters between knight and knight; the queen enthroned with her courtiers round her to behold the show, and bestow the prize; the shock of arms, the breaking of lances, the unhorsing of champions, and the shout of applause—all that and much more must have been witnessed in old Edinburgh, then so different from what it is now. And could we have seen it all with our own eyes, we should have discovered an odd medley of splendour and semi-barbarism, to which folks then with their habits and associations were quite blind.

In the month of May that same year occurred another wedding. Marie Beatoun was married to Alexander Ogilvie, of Boyne, and the previous contract, dated May the 3rd, 1566, was signed by Mary and Darnley, "they undertaking to cause George, Earl of Huntly, James, Earl of Bothwell, and others, to become cautioners for the said Alexander Ogilvie." Thus the bridegroom is connected with the husband and brother of Jane Gordon; and it will appear from the sequel that new threads were thus gathered up into the web of these destinies, to appear in an unanticipated fashion another day. Before then other things occurred, which we proceed to tell.

The story of Queen Mary and James, Earl of Bothwell, has been written over and over again in very different ways; and documents and traditions belonging to it have been a battle-ground for historians, who have had encounters with each other, such as may not inaptly be compared with the tournaments at Holyrood just mentioned. With the literary quarrels of the whole question we dare not meddle. Whether Mary fell in love with Bothwell under the influence of a misguided passion, or whether policy more than affection had to do with her conduct—because she needed a strong arm to rest upon, to fight her battles, and such an arm she found in this unscrupulous nobleman—whether on his side ambition or personal attachment was the mainspring of his conduct; whether or not she was privy to the deeds of darkness committed one memorable night at the kirk of Field, we do not here attempt to determine, for it is not required by our present story that we should do so. It is sufficient to say that Bothwell was taken more and more into favour by Mary as the year 1566 rolled on; that in the month of December, at the prince's baptism, according to despatches sent to England, he was "appointed to receive the ambassadors, and all things at the christening were at his appointment," much to the annoyance of many of the nobility—and that he appeared in "royal apparel;" gorgeous robes with hangings from Aberdeen Cathedral being bestowed on him by the queen. Her capture by the earl, and her consequent residence

at Dunbar for five days, occurred in April, 1567, and then it was blazed abroad in Edinburgh, and throughout Scotland, that Mary was going to marry Bothwell, the man accused of having murdered Darnley.

People were amazed, the more so because Bothwell was already married; and we can imagine the talk there must have been amongst the citizens and housewives of Edinburgh, and how Jane Gordon would get mixed up with Queen Mary. Mary and Jane had been friends, and now Jane's husband was going to be married to that very Mary. How could this be? How could such a marriage be legalised? What did she, who had lived with the earl for about a year, think of the new match, and of her own wifely rights? No doubt such questions arose, and were keenly debated in houses on both sides the High Street, as the spring of the year opened on the northern metropolis.

All we can here discover bearing on such questions are the following curious facts:—Two suits of divorce turn up at the end of April. First, one against the earl at the instance of his wife Jane, on the ground of his adultery with one Bessie Crawford, the lady's maid-servant. This suit came before the Edinburgh Commissaries, as they were called, recently constituted judges of divorce cases, in place of the suppressed Consistorial Court of the Archbishop of St. Andrews. A sentence of divorce was consequently pronounced on the third of May. Secondly, another suit in another court, described "as the recently restored Court of the Archbishop of St. Andrews, was instituted by the Earl of Bothwell to procure divorce from Jane Gordon on the ground that his marriage with her had been illegal, because, he averred, that he and she were within limits of consanguinity, and that no dispensation had been obtained to set aside that difficulty. The suit was successful. Sentence was given to the effect that the marriage was null, because it had taken place without the necessary dispensation. It is strange to find a husband and a wife at the same moment thus proceeding against each other for the same purpose; stranger still that two different courts should have been employed on the case, one court instituted to supersede the other, and the other court restored to concur with the first in making perfect this desired divorce; strangest of all was something which we must not mention at present, but reserve to the end of our story, when it will be set forth with its full particulars. However, thus much should at present be stated, that there were those at the time who asserted that a dispensation of the necessary kind *had been obtained*, that the marriage between Bothwell and Jane Gordon was perfectly legal, and was known to be so by both parties, and, in all probability, even by Queen Mary herself. It was the general belief that the whole affair of the divorces resulted from collusions; that the parties involved connived at what was done for reasons of their own, and that the sentence proceeded "only because the dispensation was abstracted." The puzzle remained, Who abstracted it? What became of it? and how could Jane Gordon's part in the affair be ac-

counted for? Further, how came the Earl of Huntly to connive at the treatment of his sister? It is thought that Jane Gordon was willing to get rid of a bad husband; that, through agreeing to a divorce, she assisted her brother by binding to him more closely the divorced husband, who had it in his power to improve the Gordon fortunes; and, further still, by her consenting to the arrangement, she pleased her mistress, Queen Mary.

The divorce instantly bore its desired fruit. On the 8th of May, the very day after the sentence had been pronounced, proclamation was made at Holyrood House, that the queen meant to marry Bothwell, and accordingly, on the 15th, the wedding took place at the palace. After a Roman Catholic or a Protestant ceremony? it is natural to ask. Most persons would say, of course, Queen Mary, as a Catholic, would not be married according to the rites of a Reformed Kirk; she could not regard such a marriage as legal, as binding, as valid in any way. Whatever might be thought beforehand, however, she did submit to be married after the Protestant fashion. It was arranged, she said to the court of France, "without weighing what was convenient for us, that have been nourished in our own religion, and never intended to leave the same for him or any man upon earth;" words which would imply that she had acted under compulsion. At the same time she vindicated her marriage as legal.

What followed publicly with respect to Mary and Bothwell every one knows. The marriage was unpopular. The disaffection of the people assumed unmistakable forms. Mary and Bothwell became alarmed. They fled from Holyrood. Then came the armed conference at Carberry. The separation of the husband and wife soon followed. He galloped off, after a parting kiss; she surrendered to her nobles, and returned to Edinburgh a captive. The private relations of the guilty and unhappy pair have been variously related. Some say he treated her brutally; others that they lived together in peace and love; and amongst other floating reports there was this, that after his marriage with Mary, Bothwell "corresponded with Lady Jane, protesting his affection for her, and reflecting on the queen."

After Bothwell's separation from Mary, another question of divorce came upon the carpet, the divorce of Mary from Bothwell. "I have advised her," said the English ambassador, "to enforce herself to renounce Bothwell for her husband, and to be contented to suffer a divorce to pass between them. She hath sent me word that she will in no wise consent unto it, but rather die." The confederated lords urged on her the same step, but for a time with no better success, until in May, 1569, she gave power to institute an action for procuring her divorce from Bothwell. The course now taken was that the marriage between Mary and Bothwell was illegal, "because that he was before contracted to another wife, and he not lawfully divorced from her." Lady Jane, after residing to the south of Edinburgh, proceeded to Strathbogie, her brother's seat, and there took up her abode. She would not fail to become ac-

quainted with what was going on in the case of the queen, and a report of the intended divorce of her Majesty from the earl would be sure to reach the ears of his first wife. How would it affect her? So far as any action for the divorce of Bothwell from the queen might rest on the assumption that Bothwell had not been legally divorced from Jane Gordon, it must fail if it could be established as a fact that a dispensation had been secured. The other sentence of divorce, on the ground of adultery, would, however, remain valid; but attention seems to have been mainly fixed on the sentence of divorce resulting from the alleged want of a dispensation.

The possibility of her being again claimed as Bothwell's wife, it is said, flitted before her mind very unpleasantly, and it is added that she resolved she would never live with the man any more. As the legality or illegality of her own divorce mainly depended upon whether or not there had been a proper dispensation obtained for her marriage, and she could not help being acquainted with the real facts of the case, the secret of her own position must have been in her own keeping. If a dispensation had really been obtained, she might still be treated as Bothwell's lawful wife, and she knew it; if no dispensation had been obtained, then he had no longer any control over her, and she might make herself quite easy. The mystery about that document continued in her own breast, and none could satisfactorily solve it but herself. To the end of her life she gave no solution. She resided at Strathbogie from 1567 to 1573. In July, 1567, Henry Parkhurst, writing a news-letter from Ludham to Henry Bullinger in Switzerland, says, "After the murder of Henry Darnley, King of Scotland, the queen married the Earl of Bothwell, who has lately been created Duke of Orkney. His wife is still living, and is, I am told, a most noble and excellent lady . . . the duke has fled, I know not whither, detested by almost every one on account of this cruel murder of his sovereign." In 1573 a new chapter opened on Lady Jane's history. The Earl of Sutherland, who was related to the Huntly family, came to live at Strathbogie whilst she was there. At the age of fifteen he had been inveigled by the Earl of Caithness into a marriage with that earl's daughter, Barbara Sinclair, a woman of thirty-two, of most profligate character, who made the union to cover her own intrigues. Sutherland was seventeen when he arrived at Strathbogie, and he and Lady Jane gradually formed an attachment to each other, and this resulted in a contract of marriage between them in spite of consanguinity, for which marriage another divorce had to be obtained. Lady Barbara's conduct was such that proceedings against her could be easily conducted, and the result was a legal dissolution of their marriage. Soon afterwards Sutherland was united to Jane Gordon; she then having reached the age of twenty-eight. Bothwell was still living an exile in Zealand, and he did not die till 1578. Therefore, if the mysterious dispensation had really been granted, her divorce was illegal, on the allegation of its non-existence, and doubts might be thrown on her new marriage. But in 1573 Bothwell was supposed

to be dead, and, with the apparent idea that his decease set Lady Jane Gordon free, her son, Sir Robert Gordon, speaking of her divorce from Bothwell, adds, "This Lady Jane Gordon, *after the death of the Earl of Bothwell*, was married to Alexander, Earl of Sutherland." At any rate, we should have imagined that, after his divorce and supposed death, Lady Jane could have nothing to do with Bothwell's property; yet it is one of the singularities of this story that she retained and exercised claims on his estates, and received an income from them accordingly.

She seems to have lived happily with the Earl of Sutherland, but he, being of a sickly constitution, the management of affairs was left chiefly in her hands, and she proved herself a very clever woman of business, not only keeping things well together, but considerably improving the estate by working the coal mines upon it, which turned out to be a source of large revenue. "Some of her letters, written to Sir Robert Gordon, who was tutor to her nephew, John, thirteenth Earl of Sutherland, are preserved at Dunrobin, and exhibit her as the sagacious, astute woman of business, looking at things mainly as they would affect the weal of our house;" and even with reference to the anticipated nomination of a new bishop to the see of Caithness, expressing only her hope that any "unfriend of the house might not be appointed." Her son, Sir Robert Gordon, records her merit, as practically the head of the Sutherland family, and dwells with filial affection upon her distinguished womanly virtues.

Earl Alexander died at Dunrobin in 1594, at the age of forty-two, his widow then being forty-nine; but five years afterwards, at the ripe age of fifty-four, she resolved to enter into the bonds of matrimony once more. With whom? With no other than Alexander Ogilvie, Laird of Boyne, whose marriage with Mary Bethune we have recorded as taking place within a short time of Jane's marriage with Bothwell. Bothwell and her brother Huntly had been sureties for Ogilvie at her first wedding—a circumstance which indicates friendship between the Ogilvies and the Gordons; and out of this friendship probably sprung the alliance between the couple so late in life. Indeed, the match is described as one more of convenience than love, for it is expressly said, that what she did was "for the utility and profit of her children." She had still a keen eye for the maintenance of her own rights, and we find her stipulating for the retention, "in her own hand and possession," of certain property which pertained to her out of the Earldom of Sutherland.

The Laird of Boyne did not live many years, and after his death Lady Jane remained a widow to the end of her days. She was a thorough Roman Catholic, and retained her early faith at the cost of persecution. In 1587 she was "vehemently suspected to have had mass;" and it appears that the Earl of Sutherland, and some at least of their household and retainers, shared with them in their religion. In 1597 the Assembly of the Church of Scotland ordered the Presbyteries of Dundee and Arbroath to summon before them the countess, and require her to sign the Confes-



sion of Faith, under pain of excommunication. About ten years afterwards, she and her son, the Earl of Sutherland, were ordered to be confined in the town of Inverness; and a priest, for saying mass in her ladyship's house, was tried for his life. In pursuance of a mitigated sentence, he was taken to the market cross of Edinburgh in his "mass clothes," and there chained for two hours, after which, a fire being kindled, the "mass clothes" were burnt, with "all his other Popish baggage." Again, about ten years after that, Lady Jane received a summons to appear before the High Commission in the Scotch metropolis on account of her religion, when her son, Sir Robert Gordon, procured on her behalf, "an oversight and toleration" for the rest of her days, provided she never harboured or received a Jesuit. A licence to the same effect seems to have been granted by James the Sixth of Scotland and the First of England. This pledge, however, did not preserve the lady from trouble, for in about another ten years—it is curious how the intervals of peace and quietude ran in decades—sentence of excommunication having been passed upon her, it was necessary to procure a renewal of exemption from punishment, when the faithful Sir Robert once more became surety for his mother. Sir Robert was as firm in his Presbyterianism as she was in her Roman Catholicism, and it appears they never quarrelled with each other about their differences. It is a proof of her tolerant temper, that when a Protestant relative was about sending her boy to the countess's castle, and expressed a fear of his becoming a proselyte to Popery, Lady Jane replied, "The bairn is not capable of that; and when he is, he shall be at his own command." Whether or not the mother's faith involved the son in some suspicion, Sir Robert thought fit, years afterwards, to secure a testimonial of character from the Elgin Presbyters to this effect: that "since his residence amongst us here in the Presbytery of Elgin he hath been a main advancer of the true religion, and a great furtherer and help in what concerns this present reformation, and is well affected to the Church and peace of this country, and hath yielded full and constant obedience to all public ordinances."

The old lady lived till 1629, when she died, and was buried by her two surviving children, Alexander and Robert, "in the cathedral church of Dornoch, in the sepulchre of the Earl of Sutherland." This was at her own request, and it shows a pre-eminent regard for her second husband. She had lived in stormy times, and passed through various fortunes, but, with the exception of certain vexatious proceedings against her on religious grounds, she seems to have led a tranquil, as well as active domestic life. But how much she witnessed! and with what interest, in her retirement at Strathbogie, Dunrobin, and Boyne, must she have watched the progress of events, and the fate of distinguished persons with whom, in her early days, she had been closely connected! She would hear the story of Queen Mary's life after her marriage with Bothwell, of her surrender, and his escape to Norway. The much-talked-of poems and love-letters between them would surely excite

the curiosity of her who had been Bothwell's first wife. The abdication of her royal mistress, her weary imprisonment in Lochleven Castle, the battle of Langside, and her flight to England, with all the intrigues, plots, and sufferings which ended in the terrible execution at Fotheringay, could not but occupy the thoughts and agitate the feelings of one who had loved and served the unhappy queen. And then the regency of Murray and Morton, the career of Knox, the civil wars of Scotland, the mysterious raid of Ruthven, and the mysterious Gowrie Conspiracy, would supply materials for a good deal of meditation and talk to the Lady Jane. She would follow James to England after the death of Elizabeth, and would enter into the particulars of the Gunpowder Plot, and would watch the doings of Queen Mary's son, down to his Scotch visit in 1617 and his death in 1625. The storm gathering over Charles I did not break before the friend of his grandmother had been gathered to her fathers. But however she might ponder what went on, she kept herself free from party strife. "A virtuous and comely lady," says her son; "judicious, of excellent memory, and great understanding, above the capacity of her sex: in this much to be commended, that during the continual changes and particular factions of the court, in the reign of Queen Mary, and in the minority of King James VI, which were many, she always managed her affairs with so great prudence and foresight, that the enemies of her family could never prevail against her, nor move those that were the chief rulers of the State for the time, to do anything to her prejudice—a time, indeed, both dangerous and deceitful."

And now that we have reached the end of Jane Gordon's story, the question recurs, Has any light been thrown since on the matter of the dispensation so much talked about? The Earl of Murray believed that a dispensation had really been obtained, and afterwards abstracted. "It was, no doubt, destroyed before Bothwell's divorce," says the learned antiquary, Mr. Robertson. It turns out, after all, to be still in existence. The very document, which has suggested so much speculation, has been discovered amongst the Dunrobin archives, through the researches of Dr. Stuart, under the authority of the Historical MSS. Commission. A facsimile of it is given in his interesting volume, entitled, "A Lost Chapter in the History of Mary Queen of Scots Recovered." Also it is a lost chapter recovered for the life of Lady Jane Gordon. It concerns her as much as it concerns Queen Mary, if not more. It is given in the name of John, Archbishop of St. Andrews, and it legalises the marriage between Bothwell and his bride, notwithstanding their consanguinity, whatever it might be. That being the case, then, Jane Gordon was the lawful wife of James Bothwell, and could not be divorced from him on the ground of consanguinity; at the same time, the other act of divorce on the ground of adultery did not, in the opinion of some Scotchmen learned in the law, set Bothwell free to marry again. The existence of the dispensation, therefore, appears to have been a legal bar to the mar-

riage of Bothwell with Mary, and though it could not set aside the divorce of Bothwell from Jane on the ground of adultery, it might, if known by others, have made the latter lady rather uncomfortable after her marriage with another husband whilst Bothwell was alive. And now, not only has the dispensation been brought to light, but, being found at Dunrobin, amongst the Sutherland archives, it is plain it must have been in the possession of Lady Jane, and by her secreted after her marriage, and carefully kept from the knowledge of other people, when the proceedings for her divorce from Bothwell were going on. The production of the document would have put a stop to the suit in the Archbishop's Court. More-

over, the archbishop must have known all about it, and the inconsistency of his first granting the dispensation and then annulling the marriage for the want of it, is most palpable, and exhibits an instance of unprincipled conduct exceedingly common in those days. Then, too, it is made as clear as possible that Lady Jane must have connived at her own divorce, and that, too, so far as the dispensation was concerned, simply for the purpose of promoting the marriage of her husband with another woman. The fact is as discreditable as it is curious, and altogether the story illustrates the saying that "fact is stranger than fiction."

JOHN STOUGHTON, D.D.

### CHRISTMAS "THEN" AND "NOW."

"**T**HEN." The good old times! It is the fashion to speak of them and to sigh after them. How "old" are they? How far must we go back upon the chart of Time to find them?

A thousand years?

Christmas was a great festival even "then." There was a Bible in the vulgar tongue in every church throughout the country, but there were not many who could read it; nor was it always safe to go where one might hear it read. The land was full of violence. Saxons and Danes were constantly at strife; there were robberies and murders, wholesale massacres and devastations. No man was secure. Witness King Edmund, murdered at the festal board, and Edward the Martyr, stabbed not long afterwards in the back while drinking a cup of mead on horseback. Famine and plague at the same time ravaged the land and made it desolate. No doubt there was some extra feasting and drinking as Christmas time came round among the rude soldiery in their fastnesses, but the peasants had not much share in it. Men under arms pledged each other by the dim torchlight, with one hand upon the cup and the other, on the sword-hilt.

Though the sweet story of a Saviour's birth was not unknown, and the gracious influence had already begun to work, those certainly were not "the good old times."

Let us take another period, some five centuries later.

Christmas time again.

"Then open wide the baron's hall  
To vassals, tenants, serfs and all."

The guests come—some on foot, plodding through the snow, which lies deep upon the ground as in all good old winters—others on horseback, riding double, glad to have escaped the bands of robbers by which the roads are infested, and pass at once from the gloom and cold into the brightness and warmth of the guest chamber. There

"A fire, with well-dried logs supplied,  
Goes roaring up the chimney wide."

'Tis yet early in the day, according to our degenerate ideas; for in those times men dined at ten in the morning and supped at four; but the company are in full dress; and the "fool" in motley, with a cap and bells upon his head and a little effigy of himself in his hand, stands ready to receive them with some wise or saucy greeting, and ushers them into the great dining-hall, from the high roof of which the holly and the mistletoe, relics of ancient Druidical mysteries, depend. Long tables groan beneath the weight of venison, capons, plum-puddings and mince-pies, the latter of oblong shape to represent the manger at Bethlehem.

"There the huge sirloin reeks; hard by  
Plum porridge stands and Christmas pie."

Mead, beer, and cyder flow abundantly, and soon every tongue begins to wag with interchange of kindly greetings, and the lively jest goes round.

But it is not all eating and drinking. The sacred history to which the annual festival owes its origin is not forgotten. Already, on the eve of Christmas, the simple-minded husbandmen have gone forth, lantern in hand, to their cattle-sheds, expecting to find the oxen kneeling upon their knees at the midnight hour, as if they too had some sacred memories of Bethlehem, and would celebrate with bovine reverence the birthday of their Lord and Maker.

There is not much book-learning either in the hall or the cottage; yet the Holy Bible—Wyckliffe's translation—is accessible to all who can read it; and the sweet story of the Saviour's lowly birth is made known to high and low, rich and poor. The spirit of peace and love is abroad. Neighbours and friends confess the genial influence. Kind words are exchanged, old grudges healed, injuries forgiven, foes reconciled, and friendship sealed.



CHRISTMAS VISITORS.



Are these, then, the good old times? Scarcely; for there are dark scenes which we do not care to look upon or to think of at this season—harsh, cruel, and unequal laws, poverty, oppression, misery, and crime; wars and fightings abroad, and at home rebellions and civil strifes, by which the whole nation is divided and convulsed.

Let us try another period—three or four centuries later.

George III is king—Farmer George, as the people called him. We may picture another social gathering, in which it is pleasant to observe children of all ages conspicuous. There are presents for each—a wooden horse for Tommy (let us hope he will be kind to it), a lovely doll for Barbara; books—pretty story-books—with pictures which children can admire, and letter-press which they can read, teaching them to love the Christmas festival and Christmas truths. These, too, are the days of Sunday-schools, when the Saviour's charge to His disciples is beginning to be understood in its wider and more comprehensive meaning,—“Feed My lambs.” Philanthropy and Christian fellowship are abroad. The prisons are visited, the oppressed relieved, the sick taken care of, and the heathen taught.

Surely we are getting nearer now to the “good old times.” And yet the closer we approach the less “old” do they appear. Let us come at once

to this present year of grace, 1883. The homely manners of a past generation may by some be contrasted with the more formal demonstrations of modern society; but every age has had its circles of etiquette as also its homes of simplicity. The good old times are perhaps as near to us “NOW” as they have ever been to our forefathers. Christmas is as well and truly kept, there is as much enjoyment, and its influences are, to say the least, as sweet and real as they have ever been. “Rich and poor meet together” and confess that “the Lord is the Maker of them all.” The hospitals, the work-houses, even the prisons, are invited to rejoice on this universal festival. Bibles are now scattered broadcast, not chained here and there to a pillar in the church, but placed in the hands of every child; and every child can read them. Books—what a wealth of them! gifts, playthings are distributed, not among the children of the rich alone, but to the humblest and the poorest also.

“Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this” (Eccles. vii. 10).

The good times, the best times, are yet to come. The message has been proclaimed once for all. Peace on earth, goodwill towards men. All times are good if we will make them so. Let each do what he can, by mutual charity and sympathy, and love, to hasten and to help.

### SOME CLOSING ACCOUNTS.

IT is not wise to lead a very calculating life. I mean that if we are for ever balancing this against that, and scheming how we may reach such and such an end with the least expenditure of time, money, and trouble, we are only too likely to nourish the spirit of distrust; we cultivate a habit of petty suspicion in which half the charm of human intercourse is gone, and we become incapable of exercising that faith which is divine, and which saves us from or helps us through the difficulties of our course. It is not well to encourage incessant calculation.

But times arrive in which we are drawn to look specially at ways and means, pros and cons, losses and gains; when we may wisely strike a balance; when we may add up what we have received and spent; when we look closely at our condition and position, and take deliberate measures in respect to the future discharge of our duties and conduct of our lives. There is no inevitably fixed time in which we should so act. Occasions arise in every life when a man busies himself apart from his neighbours, to look over the books of his behaviour as well as the state of his business. A personal crisis comes, or a family entanglement, an unexpected loss, sickness, possibly death.

Then, in either of these cases, the man is busy, is pressed by business in word or deed. He is driven to pause, reflect, forecast. But the world without is not agitated. His neighbours glance

at his concerns, note his animation or confusion with more or less interest or kindness; yet they are not disturbed. They have no particular call to bestir themselves. There are times, however, when all feel some common impulse to take stock of their position. These times are purely arbitrary or conventional. They arrive in periods of national disaster, or they come in company of the almanack, which points out that a measured period is drawing to a close, and a new round of the old duties and life about to begin. We have nearly reached such a turning-point now. The familiar date of 1883 will pass over to the past. A fresh calendar will lie upon our desks or be fixed upon the wall, and the commonplace business of the day will take to itself another heading. This being so, we will pause for a minute, and look at some of the thoughts which the end of a year suggests, when we are led to put things again in the scales, see what they weigh, strike some of the balances, and look over some of the old receipts of life. In making up accounts perhaps it is almost too much of a truism to say that they should be made up. There are, however, people who would be shocked at the idea of falsifying a balance-sheet, which they are bound to render to others, but who are tempted to deal a little unfairly with themselves.

This is, no doubt, very natural. We all like, or should like, to look on the best side of any difficulty or position; and when we have ourselves



OLD RECEIPTS.

alone to deal with, this desire to make things pleasant is sometimes paramount. We are scrupulous in regard to the public discharge of obligations and the rendering of their accounts with accuracy, but in respect of matters which are wholly of a private nature we sometimes spare ourselves the unpleasantness of looking our affairs fully in the face. I do not here refer to money matters. I am thinking of the estimate we should form of our condition in our own eyes or in the eyes of God. When we have it suggested to us towards the close of the year that we should balance our accounts and see how we stand, we feel that the most im-

portant inquiry of all is concerning our moral condition, concerning our reckoning with our conscience, with ourselves. Below the outward causes of gladness, of depression, which in the eyes of others affect our lives, *we* know that our real radical happiness depends upon the sincerity of our own behaviour, upon the honesty with which we are trying to do that which we believe to be right. The reckoning there determines our real state. It is the taking stock in that which shows how we stand.

Obviously, then, our first consideration is to deal fairly by ourselves. We must not yield to the

temptation to cook the accounts of the conscience. When we suspect an error there it is best to stop at once and see what wants to be put right. Generally the search need not be a long one.

There are some stupid habits which have been disturbing us. We have been put out, and though perhaps we openly or outwardly lay the fault at the door of others, we might guess pretty shrewdly that we have our own selves chiefly to blame for them. Well, let us realise these items in checking the sands of life. Don't let us slip over them. They are putting our reckoning wrong. It is best to look them fairly in the face. Those moods of carelessness which spoil legitimate opportunities might help us to be more watchful and considerate. Those passing, seemingly unimportant indulgencies which brought indisposition might warn us against habits which taint the sense of health. That slight departure from straightforwardness which we are glad was not noticed at the time cannot perhaps be rectified, but its vexatious memory may hinder our swerving from the line again. That hasty answer which bred so much mischief cannot be unsaid, but it might set us with renewed determination to keep the door of our lips. Perhaps the special item to be seen to is hastiness of speech and judgment. Look at that which presents itself as most mortifying or vexatious in the past, and note how it really arose, not so much from the disobedience of another as from our own want of self-command. In making up the accounts of our own memory and social or domestic experience, let us really *make* them, and reckon fairly how far they have been spoiled by our own self-indulgence or impatience. Or perhaps the flaw has another character. We may have missed opportunities of action and speech; we may have been too slow; we may have responded sluggishly to the promptings of kindness and been too cautious. There are faults of omission as well as of commission. And that important spiritual possession of ours—I mean conscience—will tell us, if we allow it, where the fault has been. Let us deal fairly with our own selves, and not try to square the accounts of recollection. If we judge ourselves we should not be judged, says a great authority. When we talk of balancing the books of the memory and mind, let us at the outset determine, at any rate, to see things as they are.

Again. The readiest divisions into which we might lay the result of a retrospect are those of loss and gain. Have we gained or lost? Have we made progress, gone back, or stood still?

In one sense some may be in a fairly good condition and yet hardly be able to say that they have progressed. If they are *young*, still under what is called education, they should be able to reflect upon distinct advances they have made in their studies, whatever those may be. They have read fresh books, they have been introduced to fresh processes, they have learnt to consider some things easy which they once found to be hard. They have perhaps reached fresh powers or conditions of mind or body, and to them a year may seem full, and may really have been full, of fresh facts, aspects, and feelings of life. In one sense

they may certainly have progressed. They are not, and they know they are not, what they were. Mysterious growth, mental and physical, has brought its revelations. How have they treated, how have they used, these influxes of being? Have they learnt new meanings of shame, responsibility, self-command? If they have failed in a right use of new faculties and passions, young as they still are, they may well take the advice which the oldest and gravest all feel to be right, and judge fairly by themselves, honestly resolving on a better mastery over self.

There are, though, many to whom life has become comparatively flat. They have passed through the opening periods of ordinary experience. They have settled down to their place in life. So it would seem. They have chosen a calling, or had one chosen for them; they have been for some while engaged in its exercise.

The chief landmarks of life have been passed. Education, under one form or another; entrance into business, or into the responsibility of ownership; may be, marriage. They may be seeing the next generation growing up around; looking with young eyes and untried taste at those things with which they have been long familiar. And to such as these life presents small external variety and small prospect of change. How can they estimate "progress"? In some senses they can hardly be said to have moved on. Men and women of mid and settled life are surrounded by the husks of experience. The equipment of society is what it was. There are the same markets, shops, offices, fields, neighbours. There are the old newspapers, and books which in very many cases are new only in shape. The old story is continually telling itself over again. Now and then they come across some sentence, publication, character, which has the scent and taste of freshness, but monotonous mediocrity marks the outside of the life they lead.

But they are really progressing—moving through its course. They are nearer to the end. And in reckoning gains and losses they may well ask themselves how they are looking at the lessening heap of sand which still lies in the upper half of their glass; how they are using the flame which the shrinking store of oil in the lamp is still able to supply. More oil they cannot put in. There is about the same ration for consumption served out to each. The oldest recorded experience reckons that it will last some threescore years and ten. Are any in mid life trying to forget that? An unwise effort if they are, for this truth is of all things sure to assert itself. The journey is not made pleasanter when we strive to take it with eyes thus shut. It is as we bravely open them that we learn to look at the passage of years with a firmer glance and stronger heart. We might be realising life better and better, we might be conscious of a growing power to see things as they are, and not to give too much prominence to the things of the moment. We may be conscious of a juster estimate—and the exercise of this consciousness may be very enjoyable—of matters which once exercised us much, and which, on closer inspection, are seen to be not the most



important conceivable. Of course, we don't trouble ourselves to give expression to all these thoughts, however vividly we entertain them; we are less inclined to carry our feelings on our sleeves for every daw to peck at, but we may become honestly aware of a growing strength of life and perception which we own. We truly progress. Life is more real.

We are like men on an ocean voyage, with this difference—that our voyage is taken only once. We know the time which it has been generally found to consume; we have left the excitement of embarkation behind us long ago. We have found the curiosity with which we looked forward to calms and storms in great measure satisfied, and we are thinking about the end of the course. Then, in an actual, not symbolical, voyage, passengers often forecast their landing, begin to get their things together—feel the interest of speculation in what they shall see presently revived, and have less concern about the nautical routine which surrounds them.

We are all on such a voyage, though some have only just set out, while others have only a little portion of it left. Is there no progress here? Methinks it may be most real. For, as we sit looser to the former cares of life, however unchanged or multiplied some must deem them to be, as we apprehend the enormous and increasing interest which belongs to the close of the voyage, and the revelation of a new land, then we are more capable of growing towards the measure of the stature of Christ. As our oil burns out, as our sands run down, as our voyage draws towards its end, we may thus really reckon our gains. However monotonous our outward lot, we may apprehend the approaching and enormous dissipation of this monotony. That increased perception is a gain. There have been some to say so very distinctly, St. Paul did. We cannot, however, always hold ourselves in this divine heroic mood, but there are moments in which we may touch it; when, for example, we contemplate this world from afar, as

it were, in the retirement of our thoughts, and all its cares and even joys begin to look very small, like things which we have long passed upon the road. There are such delightful day dreams to some. We are wakened from them, maybe with a start, and very properly take up the tool again, and turn to our work once more. But they come, do these parentheses of charm, as we commune with our hearts and are still. They come with growing power of perception and enjoyment as the end draws nearer. They may come with special propriety when the conventional divisions of life set us to balance our accounts, to reckon our position on the chart of life.

What I have said about gains is plainly applicable to losses. Replies to the one will almost answer inquiries about the other. But not wholly.

Though in a very true sense we may progress, and know it, when we look back many are conscious of things which they valued, which they had a right to value, but which they have lost. It is well bravely to realise this. Those who have passed out of childhood and youth may sometimes be tempted to regret a freedom which was allowed them then, but is inadmissible a little later on. They have begun to wear the harness of life, and it is not so enjoyable as once it seemed. Disillusion has set in. They are not all holidays when we leave school for good. Happy is the man or woman who soon learns this. There is a divine contemptuousness of failure which can cheer him or her who, in making up the books of life, and reckoning its losses, sees the successive stages in the course left behind.

There are, no doubt, times in which this disheartens even the hopeful. Any change has its moments of uncertainty and depression. But as we rest in the Lord the sense of His support returns, and we judge of our position by its brighter not darker hour, though even the looking over of old receipts may recall some half-forgotten business which we wish we had not done.

HARRY JONES.

## Varieties.

### What Age are the Burnham Beeches?

Mr. Vernon Heath has written a most interesting letter on this question. After referring to the tradition of the Beeches having been pollarded by Cromwell's army, a tradition as equally without foundation as other devastations ascribed to that cause, Mr. Heath says: "In the poet Gray's letter to Horace Walpole, dated September, 1737, he speaks of these trees as 'most venerable beeches,' that like most other ancient people are always dreaming out their stories to the winds. Clearly Gray is here using the word 'venerable' to describe not the boles merely, but the limbs and boughs. Now, let us take some date of the Cromwellian period, say, that of the battle of Worcester, 1650, and it will be seen that between this and Gray's letter there are only eighty-seven years, a period insufficient for the pollarded trees to have grown 'venerable' limbs.

"Gray's letter, it will be observed, was written 146 years

ago. I myself have known Burnham Beeches forty-six years, and during this time, in my belief, the boles of the great trees have scarcely in any way changed; at all events there is no perceptible change, for they were just as much mere shells when I first knew them as they are now. At the time, too, of my early acquaintance with them, I remarked within the hollows of some, formations and characteristics that have to this day in no way altered. Beyond this I used to find out all the very old people of the district, and learnt that within their knowledge of them these trees appeared in no way changed; that they were hollow when they were young, and more than that, their fathers described and spoke of them as hollow trees when they were children.

"Of course it may be said that this is traditional, but as my own forty-six years of watching and observation is not, I think the evidence of the old people I actually saw and talked to may be allowed; and say that one of these was eighty years of age, then eighty and forty-six together would

bring us to within twenty years of the date of Gray's letter. From this I evolve the theory that the boles were in his days much as they are now; and this being so, I argue that the pollarding occurred long prior to Gray's or Cromwell's period, and I believe that whenever it was done the trees were full grown. Such being the case, the age that has been accorded them in the various articles that have lately been written—viz., 400 or 500 years—is obviously a great deal too little. It would not surprise me should it be discovered that these veritable giants of old were trees at the time of the Norman Conquest. It is at least a curious fact that the well-defined remains of a moat within the district of the Beeches, which by the people in the neighbourhood is called 'Harlequin's Moat,' is in the old records written Hardicanute; and is, no doubt, one of the places of defence the Danish king made when, on the death of his brother, the first Harold, he was on his way to seize the crown of England.

"To the students of tree life, especially to those who have not actual acquaintance with these beeches, I may say that the whole have been pollarded; that the whole are hollow, reduced, indeed, as I have said, to a mere shell, and, therefore, all the usual means of arriving at a tree's age are absent. I may add that in my records of their size, the girth of one, 5ft. from the ground, is 23ft. 9in., another 21ft. 4in., while one which was blown down in 1875, the Autumn of my Four Seasons, girthed 25ft. 6in."

Mr. Vernon Heath has studied these venerable trees, first as artist, and afterwards as photographer, for nearly half a century, and we are glad to hear that he is preparing for publication a selection of his splendid photographic studies of the Burnham Beeches, now the property of the Corporation of London.

**Oliver Goldsmith in the Temple.**—Some of the houses in Garden Court have been recently demolished and rebuilt. It was in No. 3, Garden Court that the author of "The Traveller" first took up his abode on migrating to the Temple from Wine Office Court, and here he remained until one of those brief gleams of success which shone at intervals upon his shiftless life enabled him to better his quarters. Thence, descending himself as his fortunes rose, he moved down into chambers on the ground-floor of the same staircase; and from there he removed after the success of "The Good-natured Man" to Brick Court, where four years later he breathed his last. Goldsmith, unlike Johnson and Lamb, was always faithful to the Temple. It was in Brick Court that he wrote "The Deserted Village," and here, too, blossomed forth that ever-fresh oasis in the desert of his dreary hack work, "She Stoops to Conquer." It was in Brick Court, too, that he was seized with that unlucky fit of extravagance which so swiftly swallowed up the proceeds of his first successful comedy. This was the abode rendered gorgeous by "Wilton carpets and blue merino curtains," and here it was that the poet first arrayed himself in those magnificent garments which provoked the contemptuous comments of Mr. Boswell. Here, too, was the scene of those "noctes cœnæque deûm," when Goldsmith would entertain his company with Irish songs, and maddeningly distract the reflections of the learned Mr. Blackstone, deep in the fourth volume of his "Commentaries," in the rooms below. Brick Court, in short, whether as the witness of Goldsmith's short-lived happiness or of his forlorn and untimely end, will always lay claim to the larger share of his memory; but as the home of his obscurity and early struggles the chambers in Garden Court possess a certain sanctity of their own. "The Traveller," as we have said, was born in the garret of No. 3; and "The Vicar of Wakefield" first saw the light in the rooms beneath.

**Sanitation in India.**—Amidst the villages the peasants pen up the cattle inside the dwelling-houses. Amidst the largest cities the artisans are crowded together in the compartments of houses many storeys high, wherein to all the miseries which exist in these cool latitudes there are added the heat and malaria of the tropics. Again, the quality of food supply is a matter with which our studies are rightly concerned at home, and this object is almost, though not quite, equally important abroad. Respecting adulteration of food, the natives in the East have not yet acquired much proficiency in that dark science, though they might prove but too teachable if once

this black art were to gain ground at home. The purification of water for drinking and for bathing has always been among the objects of our studies, and some benefit has accrued from persistent advocacy. There is dread lest impurity in this element should produce untold evils in the United Kingdom; but we know that in India it has produced more physical mischief than any cause whatsoever, and perhaps as much mischief as all other causes put together could produce. Much of this evil is preventable by water supply provided during years of plenty, and here is a field abroad for that engineering science which has wrought wonders at home. It were almost superfluous to call to remembrance the successful efforts put forth at home respecting sanitation, drainage, and sewage. We have but lately beheld the terrible example afforded by the cholera in Egypt. The professional inspection of every new house before it is occupied is wanted in the colonies, and assuredly it is needed in the capital cities of the East. In all matters relating to the public health, the Eastern nationalities must be brought under sanitary education. Unless they learn how to save themselves, and become imbued with a desire to practise what they learn, the utmost effort of the State for saving them will fail.—*Sir Richard Temple at Social Science Congress.*

**Distance of the Sun.**—In a discourse before the British Association, Professor Ball, the Astronomer Royal for Ireland, said that the method by observation of some of the minor planets must now be depended on for obtaining more accurate determination of the distance of the sun from the earth. There would not be another transit of Venus till the year 2004. It is somewhere between 92 and 93 millions, and as the doubt only involved 1,000th part of the whole distance there was reason to hope that astronomers would ultimately by this method finally determine the distance with unflinching accuracy. His own opinion was that the distance was 92,700,000 miles.

**British Empire, its Extent and Population.**—The area of this empire, at home and abroad, nearly 8,000,000 of square miles, may fail to convey a definite idea; but the total of the population is instantly suggestive, as it amounts to 315,000,000 of souls. This population, too, is increasing at the rate of 2,500,000 annually; in other words, by 25,000,000 every decade, or 50,000,000 in every twenty years.

**Domestic Art in Cairo.**—The domestic architecture of the Arabs is especially well represented in Cairo, as that city was, during the most brilliant period of its history, the capital, inhabited by a refined Court. This period is contemporary with an age which we in Europe usually associate with the twilight of the Middle Ages, stretching as it does in contemporary English history over the period of the Conquest, and the even ruder days of our last Saxon and Danish kings, the Crusades, and the still uncouth epoch—however exquisite may have been its artistic creations—of the Scotch and French wars of the three Edwards. Two centuries after its foundation, that is, in the ninth century, Cairo, under Mamoun the Learned, the son of the famous Haroun al Raschid, was an active centre of learning and refinement. Cairo suddenly became the most important city of the East. In their wealth the caliphs revelled in the wildest dreams the "Arabian Nights" have pictured to our Western minds. The prohibitions of the Prophet respecting the representation of animate beings, respecting gambling and the use of wine, were disregarded, and to these days of Arab splendour belong some of the choicest relics we possess of the art of the caliphs. In Cairo and Damietta the looms were busy with the production of the most gorgeous stuffs, further enriched with the costliest embroideries. The goldsmiths and armourers found their most exquisite products never sufficiently choice for their fastidious clients. In the midst of such a refined existence, and with surroundings so elegant, the character of the domestic architecture, it can be imagined, was scarcely less decorative. No wealth was too great to lavish on the interiors of their homes, where gilded and painted woodwork in delicate arabesque contrasted with the deep blue of tiles of the choicest design, and hangings of the richest fabrics, floors of marble and mosaic covered with thick carpets, each marvels of decorative beauty. The wood-workers exhausted their utmost art in inlaying ivory and mother-o'-pearl and tortoiseshell in the most intricate incised designs; the sim-

plest utensils were plated or damascened with gold and silver as richly as the goldsmith's art could devise. The choicest perfumes, of which the consumption appears to have been immense, were brought from the furthestmost corners of the earth. Sumptuous as were their interiors, no display of all this wealth was allowed to be even suggested by the exterior appearance of the house. Shrewd motives suggested this custom (one that gives its peculiar character to all Oriental cities) as calculated to allay the too familiar cupidity of the ruling powers or the violence of the populace. Bare grim walls, pierced by a few small grated openings, and, in the older houses, the doorways strongly protected by loopholes and overhanging machicolations, are all that present themselves on the exterior of many of the wealthiest and most delicately-decorated of the old houses of Cairo.—*The Pottery Gazette*.

**Limits of Laws of Nature.**—The laws of nature may keep up the working of the machinery, but they did not and could not set up the machine. The human species, for example, may be upholden through an indefinite series of ages by the established law of transmission, but were the species destroyed there are no observed powers of nature by which it could again be originated. For the continuance of the system and of all its operations we might imagine a sufficiency in the laws of nature; but it is the first construction of the system which so palpably calls for the intervention of an artificer or demonstrates so powerfully the fiat and finger of a God. In these ruins, viewed as materials for the architecture of a renovated world, there did reside all those forces by which the processes of the existing economy are upholden; but the geologists assign to them a function wholly distinct from this when they labour to demonstrate that by laws, and laws alone, the framework of our existing economy was put together. It is thus they would exclude the agency of a God from the transition between one system, or one formation, and another, although it be precisely at such transition when this agency seems most palpably and peculiarly called for.—*Dr. Chalmers*.

**A. Descendant of William Penn.**—In an old copy of "The Evening Chronicle," April 30th, 1847, we find this obituary notice:—Died, on the 29th April, 1847, at the house of her son-in-law, the Earl of Ranfurly, No. 40, Berkeley Square, the Hon. Sophia Margaret Stuart, granddaughter of the celebrated William Penn, founder and proprietor of Pennsylvania, and the widow of the Hon. and Rev. W. Stuart, D.D., late Lord Primate of All Ireland, in the eighty-third year of her age.

**Which John Thomas.**—Dr. Thomas, who died Bishop of Salisbury. I so describe him, for it was not always easy to distinguish the two Dr. Thomases. Somebody was speaking of *Dr. Thomas*; he was asked, Which Dr. Thomas do you mean? Dr. John Thomas. They are both named John. Dr. Thomas, who has a living in the City. They both have livings in the City. Dr. Thomas, who is Chaplain to the King. They are both Chaplains to the King. Dr. Thomas, who is a very good preacher. They are both very good preachers. Dr. Thomas, who squints. They both squint; for Dr. Thomas, who died Bishop of Winchester, handsome as he was, had a little cast in one of his eyes. John Thomas, Bishop of Salisbury, was Preceptor to the Prince of Wales (George III). I may add that both these John Thomases had been Bishops of *Salisbury*, one in 1757, the other in 1761. He of Salisbury died in 1766; he of Winchester in 1791; but there was a *third* Dr. John Thomas, who succeeded Dr. Pearce as Dean of Westminster, and on his death, in 1774, succeeded him as the Bishop of Rochester.—*Bishop Newton's Autobiography*.

**Christmas Gifts in a New Light.**—A novel and practical rendering of the words, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," occurred in John Wandmaker's famous Bethany Sunday-school in Philadelphia last Christmas. Instead of giving presents to the children, the old custom was reversed, and the children brought presents to give to others. These presents were as miscellaneous a lot as were ever collected on a Sunday-school platform. Nearly every one of the two thousand children in the Sunday-school brought some gift. The parents and friends also bestowed liberally, some of the

articles presented being of considerable value. There were all manner of toys for little children, and garments for those of every size. There were bags and barrels of flour, and immense quantities of vegetables. There were whole carcases of sheep and hogs, which were not the less acceptable because novel. Many of the gifts were given out to the poor and needy of the neighbourhood. The rest were sent to some of the orphans' homes and other benevolent institutions of the city. A procession of waggons waited for them outside the Sunday-school hall during the services, after which the larger boys enjoyed the fun of loading up.—*New York Witness*.

**British Museum Reading Room in 1759.**—I often pass four hours in the day in the stillness and solitude of the reading room, which is uninterrupted by anything but Dr. Stukely the antiquary, who comes there to talk nonsense and coffee-house news; the rest of the learned are (I suppose) in the country, at least none of them come there, except two Prussians, and a man who writes for Lord Royston. When I call it peaceful, you are to understand it only of us visitors, for the society itself, trustees and all, are up in arms, like the fellows of a college. The keepers have broke off all intercourse with one another, and only lower a silent defiance as they pass by. Dr. Knight has walled up the passage to the little house, because some of the rest were obliged to pass by one of his windows in the way to it. Moreover the trustees lay out £500 a year more than their income; so you may expect all the books and the crocodiles will soon be put up to auction.—*Gray's Letters*.

**A Wonderful Canary.**—There was a woman who kept a great coffee-house in Pall Mall, and she had a miraculous canary-bird, that piped twenty tunes. Lady Sandwich was fond of such things, had heard of and seen the bird. Lord Peterborough came to the woman and offered her a large sum of money for it; but she was rich, and proud of it, and would not part with it for love or money. However, he watched the bird narrowly, observed all its marks and features, went and bought just such another, sauntered into the coffee-room, took his opportunity when no one was by, slipped the wrong bird into the cage, and the right into his pocket, and went off undiscovered to make my Lady Sandwich happy. This was just about the time of the Revolution, and, a good while after, going into the same coffee-house again, he saw his bird there, and said, "Well, I reckon you would give your ears now that you had taken my money." "Money!" says the woman, "no, nor ten times that money now; dear little creature; for, if your Lordship will believe me (as I am a Christian it is true), it has moped and moped, and never once opened its pretty lips since the day that the poor king went away!"—*Gray's Letters*.

**The Venetian Gondola.**—It is extremely difficult, even for a practised University oarsman, to acquire the skill of the gondolier. The long-bladed oar of the Venetian works against a crooked grooved rowlock, against which it must always be held home alike when the stroke is delivered and while the blade is brought back. This is all done under water, with no false impulse to the direction of the boat, though the stroke is made on one side only. Deftly withheld from "yawing" by the fish-like back screw which the gondolier gives, the black hull glides along like a living thing, rearing over the scarcely-stirred water that quaint rostrum of notched steel which is certainly a survival of Roman ship-building.

**Non-Alcoholic "Pick-me-Ups."**—Dr. E. Symes Thompson, F.R.C.P., communicated to the "Church of England Temperance Chronicle" several remedies which he found useful in cases where a medicinal substitute seemed to be needed to overcome the craving for alcohol. He says "pick-me-up" No. 1 should only be used when the craving is great. Nos. 2 and 3 are suited for persons whose strength has been deteriorated by long habits of excess. No. 4 is specially adapted for those accustomed to a bitter with meals, but need not be taken with meals unless desired. 1. "Pick-me-up."—Sal volatile, spirit of chloroform, compound tincture of cardamoms, of each half an ounce. Dose, a teaspoonful or two in a wineglassful of water. 2. Solution of the per-



chloride of iron, spirit of mindererus, spirit of chloroform, of each half an ounce; water, half a pint. Dose, a tablespoonful or two twice a day in a wineglassful of water. 3. Citrate of quinine and iron, a drachm; spirit of cloves, half an ounce; water to half a pint. Take two tablespoonfuls twice a day. 4. Quassia chips, a quarter of an ounce; cold water, a pint. After standing for half an hour, strain. The infusion is then ready for use, and may be taken, a wineglassful at a time, alone or mixed with a teaspoonful or two of "malt extract." N.B.—This infusion of quassia may be used instead of water, in Form 2 or 3.

**Yule.**—The romance is taken out of this old name for the Christmas festival, if we believe the interpretation of those who maintain it is derived from *Ol*—i.e. ale, much used at one period in the church festivals, such as Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide. The old name intensified became *Iol*, from which *Illos* naturally follows. *Iol* was changed to Yule afterwards.

**Barrow-in-Furness.**—Mr. Hyde Clark, a veteran engineer, says that when he first came to Barrow-in-Furness he saw that if it had its railway, its splendid harbour could be utilised, and it was now recognised as one of the best between Scotland and Wales. It had been put in connection with the other systems of railway, and was not only a port of great importance for the shipment of iron ores, but had an important connection with the other ports of the world. There were still 40,000 acres to be reclaimed and capable of becoming good agricultural land. If reclaimed it would enable a railway to be carried across the bottom of the bay. There was now a population in Barrow-in-Furness of 50,000, and

although there had been great depression, there were elements which pointed to a probable increase to 100,000 or 200,000 persons. If the town got its railway accommodation, it would be in a position to take that part in the trade of the country which was now held by other ports having less natural facilities and capabilities. It would be a shame if the Crown or if the Duchy of Lancaster hindered the employment of capital in reclaiming the now submerged land, and thereby interfered with plans of national benefit.

**Apples.**—At the great national apple show at Chiswick, in the autumn of 1883, about a thousand varieties were exhibited. Mr. Barrow, the superintendent of the gardens, is attempting to form a catalogue of three hundred carefully selected and named varieties. By thus reducing the number of local and fanciful designations, and introducing some uniformity of nomenclature, a great benefit will be rendered to Pomology.

**Mr. Bright on Luther's Reformation.**—Referring to the great work of Luther in earlier times, Mr. Bright says: "Every conflict does not need a Luther. Our battles are not so fierce, and the strength and passion of the great reformer are scarcely called for in our time. Our triumphs are not after battles with 'confused noise and garments rolled in blood.' They come of discussion and gradual change of opinion, and not of great catastrophes, which is a thing to be thankful for. I hope, though we may not have Luthers, we may have teachers whose voice or pen may reach all corners of the land, and guide our people to a higher moral standard. There is a growth—we wish it were more rapid, and must learn to have and to exercise patience in this as in other things."

## The Changes of the Year.

SPRING clothed the earth with beauty, streams set free  
From icy bondage leapt exulting by,  
Beneath moss-covered banks, whence cheerfully  
Peeped the wood-sorrel and the violet shy  
That gazed half-hidden on the clear blue sky;  
The opening buds displayed a tender green,  
And feathery flowers began to beautify  
Palm willows on the banks, whose roots between  
The amber cowslip drooped, the primrose smiled serene.

Spring passed away, and Summer in its stead  
Reigned in red glory; o'er the brook, whose flow  
Was sluggish grown, a veil of mist was spread;  
Flowers graced the banks, and frequent was the glow  
Of roses that at random seemed to strow  
Their beauty on the briar; and drooping hung  
O'er clear blue massed forget-me-nots below,  
Broad golden flags with purple loosestrife strung,  
And spikes of flowering rush the watercress among.

Then Autumn comes, and clogged with fallen leaves  
The stream hoarse murmuring struggles on its way,  
Each passing gust some stately tree bereaves,  
Rustles the withered foliage on the spray;  
Yet still from matted leaves and heavy clay  
Some bright-hued blossoms rear a timid head,  
The wild geranium makes a lingering stay,  
The constant daisy gems its emerald bed,  
The pallid hairbell mourns above the rose-leaves dead.

But Winter banished these, and where they died  
In snowy winding-sheet their forms enshrined;  
Above the brook in icy fetters tied,  
The bare boughs creaked and rattled in the wind,  
Yet still some straggling flowers remained behind;  
Gleamed the gold furze above the snow-clad ground,  
Pale snowdrops, emerald-tinged, the streamlet lined,  
The very frost upon the trees around,  
With dreamland fairy flowers their gloomy branches crowned.

Thus change the seasons, emblems of the heart,  
That ever varies as the changing year,  
That now beholds spring flowers of hope depart,  
And now exults in summer glories here,  
Nor thinks of Autumn then most surely near.  
Yet even when memory's leafless boughs are all  
Left of past joys, hope's straggling flowers will cheer  
The stream of life, nor winter's frown appal,  
—God's frosts can still create new beauties where they fall.

J. R. VERNON.



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## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE "LEISURE HOUR" VOLUME FOR 1883.

PLACES AND THEIR ASSOCIATIONS:—	PAGE		PAGE		PAGE
Bamborough, Grace, Darling's Tomb	444	New Forest:—		Lawyer Nash	65
Casamicciola, Ischia, before the Earthquake	637	A Well-balanced Group	301	"Ernest has some good news"	71
Congo (Maps)	625, 628	Boldre Church	298	"Etta Lacy, I suppose"	74
Dolomites, In the	211	Evening Scene in Forest	300	Mr. Rivera has out the Account-books	129
Dorsetshire, Scenes in:—		New Southern Railroad to Colorado and California:—		Evening	132
Bere Regis	117	Arizona Deserts, Mammoth Cactus	405	"Locking up and going the Rounds"	139
Dorchester	242	Buckhorn Wall, West Virginia	358	The Shortest Way	213
Dorset Cottages	240	Cheat River Grade, Alleghany Mountains,		Late in Church	214
Isle of Portland	119	West Virginia	361	In Pursuit	223
Maiden Castle	52	Potomac Rapids	281	A Stormy Day	257
Wimborne St. Giles	170	Routes to the Pacific (Map)	279	A Consultation	264
Egyptian Pyramids	59	Niagara Falls, Whirlpool Rapids	603	Ernest Returns from Deanton	266
Egyptian Soudan (Map)	308	Pelgero and its Haven	696	A Final Resolution	321
Epping Forest:—		San Francisco, Sea-Lion Rocks off.	510	A Strange Intruder	328
Queen Elizabeth's Lodge	501	Scene Palace, Douglas Pine in Grounds of	207	Urgent Business	331
Old British Camp, Ambresbury Banks	502	Tyrol in the Dolomite District	211	They Opened every Folded Paper they could find	385
Monks' Wood	503	Venice	725	A Cross-examination	388
Map of the Forest	505	Ca' d'Oro Palace on the Grand Canal	726	They might have been Strangers	453
Florence, Casa Guidi	401	Campanile of St. Mark's, and Palace of the Doges	729	The Arrival of the Heir	457
Fonthill	462	Entrance into Doges' Palace	728	"Come here, Sir," he said loudly	460
Forest of Guines, Memorial Column to Montgolfier	379	Palace of the Doges	726	"How much Money has Miss Bellair?"	545
Gloucester Cathedral, Nave of "Great Birnam Wood," Last Trees of	662	San Marco	727	"Was Etta Lacy ever engaged to Harold?"	552
Hatfield, Home of the Cecils:—		The Grand Canal	726	IN ALSACE:—	
Garden Front, Hatfield House	577	The Rialto Bridge and Fish Market	729	Home again	88
Hatfield House	581	Venetian Street	728	Salome and her Father	92
Old Oak at Hatfield	579	Willesden Church	436	A Flood	93
Hawarden:—		Yosemite Valley:—		LATCH-KEY, THE: OR, TOO MANY BY HALF:—	
Castle	99	Cathedral Rocks	478	John Arrowsmith Interrupts a Pleasant Conversation	513
Church	101	Mariposa Groves	477	"What is the meaning of this?" the Stranger asked	590
Lower Lodge	97	Mirror Lake	477	Mr. Winterblossom proposes a Sail	672
Park Gate and Orphanage	100	Sierras of the Yosemite	479	CHRISTOPHER:—	
Tree Felled by Mr. Gladstone	102	NATURAL HISTORY NOTES:—		A Talk with the Oxen	641
Himalayan Heights	698	Concerning Cats:—		A Welcome Arrival	642
House of Rogers, the Poet, in Green Park	721	Cat and Kitten	96	Donna Inez	645
Hughenden:—		Cat Ringing Bell	50	A Storm on the Prairie	648
Church	35	On the Housetop	95	Waiting for the Verdict	651
Manor	23	Patience	227	No one stopped him	652
Lady Beaconsfield's Grave	37	Pet Kitten	161	Bitter Tears	715
Lord Beaconsfield's Monument	36	Privileged Kitten	225	GRANDMOTHER AND HER THREE LOVERS:—	
Iceland:—		Raphael of Cats	224	A Visit to Catinetta	408
Crossing a Volcanic Plain	431	Gigantic Sea Saurian	121	"Wait for the Order of our Virtuous Prince"	412
Icelandic Costumes	428	Pelican Fish	311	Zimmer's Return	413
Great Geyser	429	PORTRAITS:—		Flight	414
Kirkliston Church	491	Browning, Elizabeth Barrett	399	MISCELLANEOUS:—	
Kirkliston from the River	491	Browning, Robert	398	Adjutant's Parade	432
Knowsley:—		Darling, Grace	443	Æsop in Mongolia:—	
Boathouse on Lake	538	Darling, William	443	It cannot be true	687
Entrance to Knowsley	533	Doré, Gustave	187	"The King of the Beasts"	750
Home of the Stanleys	532	Gambetta, Leon	125	The Last One she devoured	687
Sundial at Knowsley	535	Graham, Sir James	554	A Midnight Watch in Germany	734, 735
Lawyers and their Haunts:—		Linnæus	351	Archæopteryx Macrura	106
Fountain Court, Temple	112	Luther, Martin	671	At the Dawning	618
House of Aubone Surtees, Newcastle	155	Martin, Sir Theodore, K.C.B.	291	At the Workhouse	24
New Law Courts	45	Moffat, Robert	653	Both so Good	247
Old Temple Stairs	109	Nasmyth, James	449	Bringing up by Hand	705
Queen Square	288	Normanby, Lord	555	Building of Fonthill by Night	462
Staple Inn	171	Northbrook, Earl of	105	Captive Jews in the Circus at Alexandria	186
Westminster Hall in the Eighteenth Century	47	Owen, Professor Richard, C.B., L.L.D., F.R.S.	523	Christmas Visitors	757
Westminster Hall, Trial of Warren Hastings	47	Palmerston, Lord	555	Comet of 1882	380
Malay Peninsula, Sketches in the:—		Peel, Sir Robert	554, 556	Court of Justice in the Jungle	467
British Marriage Present	150	Rogers, Samuel	709	Fishing in China	637
Chinese Coolie	19	Russell, Lord John	555	Fishing with Cormorants	634
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Malay "Dug-Out"	202	Handwriting on the Wall, The	682	Indian Fables:—	
Scene by Night in a Malay Kampong	80	Lord Brougham proposes to give the Duke of Wellington a Lesson in Oratory	668	Elephant and Ape	306
Mongolia:—		Lord Melbourne at Windsor	663	Tiger and Hare	306
Mongol Encampment	285	Sir W. Molesworth	665	Crane and Crab	307
Mongol Girls	297	Three Tory Secretaries—Stanley, Peel, Graham	554	Interior of a Dining-room Car	543
Moscow:—		Three Whig Secretaries—Palmerston, Russell, Normanby	555	Montgolfier's Balloon Ascent	378
Between the Streets	340	Wellington and Peel	556	Morning Parade	120
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Kremlin Restaurant	338	Foxes	611	"By your leave, Sir"	631
Kremlin Towers	337	Hares	611, 612, 613	Case of Neglect	630
Lubianka Gate	341	Mass Meeting	609	Doubtful Attentions	631
Racecourse	341	Stag at Bay	613	Last Straw	630
Red Place	344	OLD MAN'S WILL, THE:—		Pet Passenger	630
Russian Beggar	343	Jewels for Miss Etta	1	Stand Back	631
Russian Gipsy Girl	340	A Call at the Vicarage	11	Robinson Crusoe	381
Street Scene in a Fire	342	Domestic Difficulties	13	Shepherd and Sheep	273
Tverskoi Street	343			Spots on the Sun (Diagram)	178
Village of Adinrowa	343			Thug Inveigler	615
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				Will the Boat come back?	395



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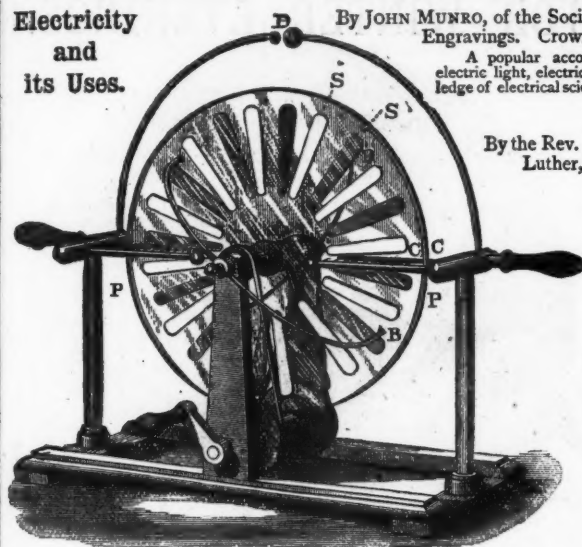
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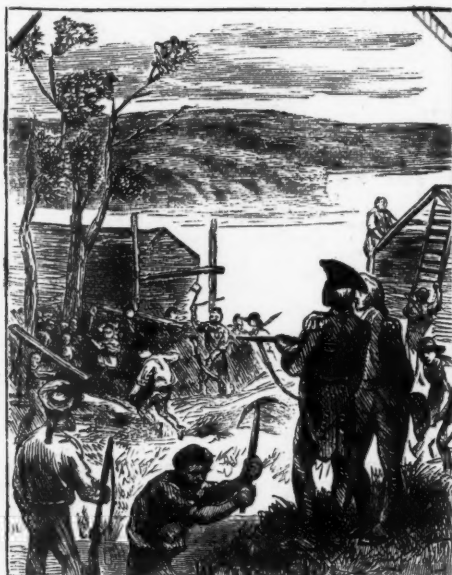
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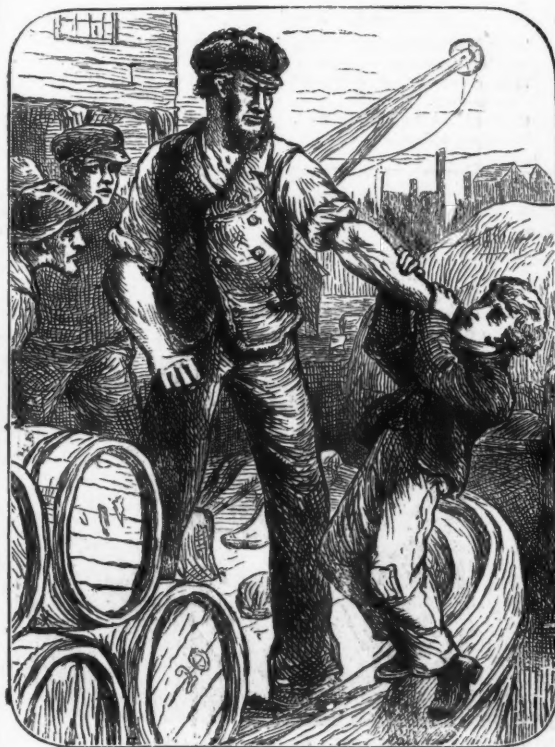
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
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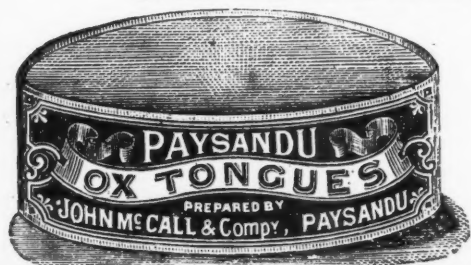
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